DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Let Virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy Confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the Doctrine of the Priesthood shall Distil upon thy soul as the Dews from Heaven. (D & C 121:45)

OCTOBER 1974 Salt Lake City, UTAH VOL. 1 NO. 1

THE ROAD TO ETERNAL LIFE

Collier's Publishing Co.

Copyright © 2017
by
Fred C. Collier
All Rights Reserved

Copies may be obtained
by writing:

Collier's Publishing Co.
HC 63 Box 1B
Hanna, Utah 84031

Phone:
(385) 404-1575

Email:
ChurchOfTheFirstborn1842@gmail.com

http://Church-of-the-Firstborn.org

Introduction

It is man's greatest desire to be happy — to obtain the greatest joy which he can possibly acquire, for "Man is that he might have joy." (2 Nephi 2:25)

There is in the Heaven of Heavens a God, who because of His greater intelligence (Abraham 3:18–19), had the most perfect understanding of the ways and means by which all other gods (UPR 16: <March 1832> 1–11) might acquire for themselves the greatest possible joy. Because of the greater knowledge which He possessed, and the ability which He had to implement it, He became the "Eternal God of all other gods before this world was" (D&C 121: <20 March 1839> 32). This "God . . . finding He was in the midst of spirits . . . [took matters in hand that He might exalt them in eternal] glory [— in other words, being] . . . more intelligent, [the Head God] saw proper to institute Laws whereby the rest [of the Eternal Spirits] could have a privilege to advance like Himself," (TPJS 354; HC 6: <7 April 1844> 312; Abraham 3:18–19) and thus the Gospel was instituted, being founded upon Eternal Principles, or Immutable Laws, that man might be as God is, that he might have the greatest possible joy.

Now this Gospel was more than a mere smattering of doctrine requiring belief only — indeed, not only did it entail a belief system, but it also included an entire life consuming ***Way Of Life!*** *It was* ***The Road*** *to* ***Eternal Life****, and its living required understanding and diligence. It required* ***Faith****, but not* ***Blind Faith*** *— it required* ***Obedience****, but not without* ***Conscience****, and it required* ***Complete Sacrifice****, but not without* ***Purpose****, and* ***Meaning****. Being founded in the Eternal and Unalterable Principles of Existence, this Gospel was instituted with such* ***Infinite Wisdom*** *that it was an* ***Infallible Guide*** *equally useful to all Eternal Beings, leading them on in their Journey into* ***Eternal Life****, regardless of what stage of development to which they might have arrived. But this most Perfect of all Maps, in order for it to serve its purpose, required more than being* ***Written on Paper****. Indeed, it must be* ***Indelibly Inscribed*** *in the* ***Hearts and Minds*** *of all those who possessed it — for its comprehension required more than the* ***Two Dimensions of Words****,* ***Ink*** *and* ***Paper*** *— to be sure, its comprehension required the* ***Realistic Dimensions*** *of Vision and the* ***Spirit*** *of the* ***Living God****.*

*It is this "****Gospel****", or this "****Road*** *to* ***Eternal Life****" to which this is Dedicated. In the case of this issue, the principle focus is not so much the* ***Gospel****, as it is the* ***Principles*** *which involve its* ***Pursuit*** *and* ***Discovery****. The reason for this approach will be self evident in the pages that follow. Indeed, coming into possession of the Truth in a World that is Filled with Darkness and Deception is not a simple matter! When we arrive here on Earth we are deprived of our Memory and all Previous Understanding, and it is left as our Task to Discover the Road, and to develop within our Hearts and Minds the Love of Right, which is necessary in order to Cling to the "Narrow Path" that leads to "Eternal Life" and "Endure To The End". (Written in 1974)*

The Road to Eternal Life

by
Fred C. Collier

(First Written in 1973)

The Secret Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith

There were ***Principles*** and ***Doctrine*** which the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that were never given out to the general membership of the Church. Joseph once stated:

> Paul ascended into the third heavens, and he could understand the three principal rounds of Jacob's ladder — the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial glories or kingdoms, *where Paul saw* and ***heard things*** which Were Not Lawful For Him To Utter. I could explain a ***hundred fold more than*** I ever have of the glories of the kingdoms manifested to me in The Vision, were I permitted, and Were The People Prepared To Receive Them. (*TPJS* 305; *HC* 5: <21 May 1843> 402)

Even though most of the Higher Doctrine and Principles of the Gospel were never revealed to the general public, still the Prophet did confide many of these to his trusted friends in the last years of his life. Benjamin F. Johnson, who was a close friend and *adopted son* of the Prophet, bore testimony to this as follows:

It was at Nauvoo early in 1844 in an assembly room common to the meeting of a *Council* or Select Circle *of the Prophet's most trusted Friends* . . . which at times would exceed *Fifty* in number. Its sittings were always Strictly Private . . . . And being about the youngest member of that *Council*, I was deeply impressed with all that transpired, ***or was taught by the Prophet*** . . . . . And now my dear brother after 60 years have passed at 85 in age, I bear to you and to all the world a solemn testimony of the truth and verity of what I have written above; for although so many years have intervened, they are still in my mind as fresh as when they occurred; no doubt as a *part* fulfillment of a prediction by the Prophet, *relating* to *"Testimonies* I should bear ***of his teachings*** after I had become hoary with age". There were dear brother, ***other teachings*** *to that Council* of which *I am not at full liberty to write*; but if I had your ear I would remember that the Prophet once said to me, *"Benjamin in regard to those things I have taught you privately* ***that are not yet for the public***, I Give You The Right, *when you are so led* ***to commit them to others*** *for you will not be led wrong* in discerning those worthy of your confidence." (Benjamin F. Johnson letter to George S. Gibbs <Oct 1903>; *Unpublished Revelations* Vol 1, Part 61: 25–29, 42–45)

The objective of this work is to bring to light, through a thorough documentary, the Prophet's secret teachings, which were revealed in privacy to his trusted friends. A special effort will also be made to shed light on the fulfillment of the Prophet's prediction, concerning the *"testimonies"* which Benjamin F. Johnson was commissioned to bear when he was so led by the Spirit of God. As Benjamin said, among other things, these testimonies *related* to things that Joseph had privately taught to the circle of friends then around him, of whom Benjamin was the *Last Surviving Witness.* It is hoped that this knowledge will bestow upon those who are disposed to learn a better understanding and keener awareness of their Responsibilities, that they might strive more diligently to serve the Lord and devote themselves to a life of living the Gospel.

Many of the heretofore hidden teachings which will be brought to light in other issues of *Doctrine of the Priesthood* may prove shocking to a good many. For this reason this first issue is dedicated to opening the minds of the Saints, that they might be more fully prepared to receive ***the Fulness of the Gospel of the*** **Father** (3rd Nephi 16:10–15).

— The Need for Knowledge —

The importance of obtaining a knowledge of the things of God cannot be over stressed, for "we cannot keep the commandments of God without first

knowing them". (*TPJS* 256; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1842> 135) There is perhaps no issue that the Prophet stressed stronger than the need for the Saints to obtain *knowledge* ***of the things of God***. The following statements are a sample of some of Joseph's teachings on this subject:

Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come. (D&C 130: <2 April 1843> 18–19)

Joseph the Seer arose in the power of God . . . . He wished to say a few words to suit the condition of the general mass, and then said: I shall speak with [the] authority of the Priesthood in the name of the Lord God, which shall prove a Savor of Life unto Life, *or of* Death *unto* Death. . . . *If you wish to go where God is*, ***you must be like God***, or *Possess* the Principles which God *Possesses*, for if we are not drawing Towards God in Principle, we are Going From Him and Drawing Towards the Devil. . . . . As far as we Degenerate from God, we Descend to the Devil and Lose Knowledge, and ***without knowledge*** *we cannot be saved* . . . . ***Add to your faith*** Virtue, *to virtue* **Knowledge**, and Seek for Every Good Thing. . . . . A man is saved ***no faster than he gets knowledge***, for *if he does not get* ***Knowledge***, he will be brought into captivity by some Evil Power . . . . Hence . . . [the need for] Revelation to assist us, and give us **Knowledge** *of the Things of God* (*TPJS* 216–217; *HC* 4: <10 April 1842> 588)

Knowledge Saves a Man; and in the world of spirits *no man can be exalted* ***but by knowledge*** . . . If a man has **Knowledge**, he can be saved; (*TPJS* 357, *HC* 6: <7 April 1844> 314)

Add to your faith Knowledge, etc. The ***Principle of Knowledge*** *is the Principle of Salvation*. This principle can be comprehended by the faithful and diligent; and Everyone *that does not obtain* **Knowledge** ***Sufficient to be Saved*** *will be Condemned*. (*TPJS* 297; *HC* 5: <14 May 1843> 387)

The Need for Knowledge is set forth in a Revelation given to the Prophet in 1832:

And I give unto you a Commandment that you shall *Teach one another the Doctrine of the Kingdom*. ***Teach ye Diligently*** and My Grace Shall Attend You, *that you may be Instructed* ***more Perfectly*** in theory, ***in Principle, in Doctrine,*** *in the Law of the Gospel,* in All Things That Pertain ***unto the Kingdom of God***, that are Expedient for you to Understand; Of things Both in Heaven *and* in the Earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms — That ye may be Prepared In All Things when I shall Send You Again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the Mission with which I have Commissioned you. (D & C 88:77–80)

In all these statements we see the Prophet's great stress on the importance of "**KNOWLEDGE**", as he repeats over and over again the Doctrine that "**KNOWLEDGE** is the **POWER** *of* **SALVATION**" (*TPJS* 306; *HC* 5: <21 May 1843> 403) and that "It is Impossible for a man to be **SAVED** *in* **IGNORANCE**." (D&C 131: <16, 17 May 1843> 6) And why is it that a man must have **KNOWLEDGE** *to be* **SAVED**? It is because *the Principles* and *Practice* of a man's life *Can Never* ***Transcend his own Knowledge*** of **GODLINESS**.

— THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH —

President Young manifest his ***Adoration*** *and* ***Love*** of the **TRUTH** in the council which he gave to departing missionaries:

The President addressed the MISSIONARIES **. . . .** He . . . exhorted them to keep **VIRTUOUS**, and **PRESERVE** their **INTEGRITY** *before their* **GOD** . . . . He further said [that] ***Truth*** *should be* ***Foremost*** *in their* ***Affections***. **TRUTH** *was his* **Idol**, and *it should be* ***Dearer*** *to them than* ***wives*** *and* ***children***. (*The Office Journal of President Brigham Young 1858–1863 Book D* <Sunday 21 April 1861> 237–238)

The scriptures contain many beautiful statements about God and the correlation between **HIM** *and* **TRUTH**. The following passages are a few of them:

I will publish the name of Yahweh: ascribe ye Greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, *his work is* PERFECT: for *all his ways are* ***Judgment***: A GOD OF TRUTH *and without* ***Iniquity***, ***Just*** *and* ***Right*** *is* **HE**. (Deut 32:3–4)

Now I . . . praise and extol and honour ***the King of Heaven,*** all whose works are **TRUTH**, *and his ways* ***Judgment*** (Dan 4:37)

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father ***in*** **SPIRIT** *and in* **TRUTH**: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. . . . they that worship Him must Worship Him *in* **SPIRIT** *and in* **TRUTH**. (John 4:23–24)

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, ***I am the*** **LIGHT** *of the* ***World:*** he that followeth me *shall not* ***Walk*** *in* ***Darkness,*** but shall have the ***Light of Life***. . . . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ***And ye shall Know the Truth,*** and the **TRUTH** *shall make you* FREE. (John 8:12, 31–32)

Jesus saith unto him, I am the **WAY**, *the* **TRUTH**, *and the* **LIFE** (John 14:6)

Howbeit when he, ***the Spirit of Truth,*** is come, *he will Guide you* ***into all*** **TRUTH** (John 16:13)

Sanctify them *through thy* ***TRUTH:*** ***thy Word*** *is* ***Truth***. (John 17:17)

The following are some of the Restoration Scriptures that ***touch*** upon this subject:

the Spirit *speaketh the* ***Truth and lieth not***. Wherefore, it speaketh of things ***as they Really Are,*** and of things ***As They Really Will Be*** (Jacob 4:13)

And the Lord said unto him: Believest thou the words which I shall speak? And he answered: Yea, Lord, ***I Know that thou Speakest*** the **Truth**, for thou art **a God of Truth**, ***and canst not lie.*** (Ether 3:11–12)

And whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do Good is of Me; for Good cometh of none save it be of Me. I am the same that leadeth men to **All Good** . . . . *I am the* ***light,*** and the **Life**, and the **Truth** of the world. (Ether 4:12)

the Spirit beareth record, and ***the record is True,*** and the **Truth** Abideth **Forever** (D&C 1: <1 Nov 1831> 39)

For *the word of the Lord is* **Truth**, and *whatsoever is* ***Truth is Light,*** and *whatsoever is* **Light** *is* **Spirit**, *even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.* And *the Spirit giveth light* to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through[out] the world, that hearkeneth to the **Voice** *of the* **Spirit**. And *every one that hearkeneth to the* ***voice*** *of the* ***Spirit Cometh unto God,*** even the Father. (D&C 84: <22, 23 Sept 1832> 45–47)

He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the ***Light of Truth;*** *Which* ***Truth*** *Shineth.* This is the Light of Christ. (D&C 88: <27 Dec 1832> 6–7)

For Intelligence cleaveth unto Intelligence; Wisdom receiveth Wisdom; ***Truth*** *embraceth* ***Truth;*** Virtue loveth Virtue; ***Light*** *cleaveth unto* ***Light*** (D&C 88: <27 Dec 1832> 40)

Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the ***Spirit of Truth;*** And **Truth** *is* ***Knowledge*** *of* ***Things*** *As They* ***Are,*** and as they were, and as they are to come; And whatsoever *is more or less than this* ***is the Spirit*** *of that* ***Wicked One*** who was **a Liar** *from the* **Beginning**. ***The Spirit*** *of* ***Truth*** *is of* ***God***. I am the **Spirit** of **Truth**, and John bore record of me saying: He received ***a Fulness of Truth,*** yea, even ***of All Truth;*** And *no man receiveth a Fulness unless he* ***Keepeth*** *his* ***Commandments.*** *He that keepeth his Commandments* ***receiveth*** **Truth** *and* **Light**, until he is ***Glorified*** *in* ***Truth*** and ***Knoweth*** *all* **Things**. Man was also in the Beginning with God. **Intelligence**, *or the* **Light** *of* **Truth**, Was Not Created or Made, Neither Indeed Can Be. All Truth ***is Independent*** in that Sphere in which God has placed it, to Act For Itself, as all Intelligence also; otherwise there is No Existence. . . . . The glory of God is **Intelligence**, or, in other words, **Light** *and* **Truth**. ***Light*** *and* ***Truth*** forsake that evil one. . . . . And that Wicked One cometh and taketh away **Light** *and* **Truth**, through disobedience, from the children of men, and *because of the* ***tradition*** *of their* ***fathers***. But I have commanded you to bring up your children in **Light** *and* **Truth**. (D&C 93: <6 May 1833> 23–42)

mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, *for he is Full of **Grace** and* **Truth** (Moses 1: <June 1830> 6)

and naught but ***Peace, Justice***, and **Truth** is the habitation of thy throne (Moses 7: <Dec 1830> 31)

Now let us contrast the above statements to the scriptural characterization of Satan:

I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. . . . . Ye are of your father the **Devil**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a ***murderer*** from the beginning, *and **abode** not in the **Truth,*** Because There Is No Truth In him. *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: **for he is a liar,*** and The Father Of It. And because *I tell you the **Truth,** ye believe me not. . . . And if I say the* **Truth**, why do ye not believe me? ***He** that is of **God** heareth **God's words:*** ye therefore hear them not, Because ***Ye** Are **Not** of **God***. (John 8:38–47)

The Book of Revelations gives us the following information regarding the status of Lies and Liars in the Kingdom of God:

And I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth: for the First Heaven and the First Earth were Passed Away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride Adorned for her Husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. . . . . And he said unto me . . . I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. *He that overcometh **shall inherit all things;*** and I will be his God, and ***he shall be my son.*** But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, ***and all liars,*** shall have their part *in the lake which burneth* with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. . . . . And there shall in no wise enter into . . . [the Holy City] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, *or maketh a lie:* but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. . . . . Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to *the* **Tree** *of* **Life**, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are ***dogs***, and ***sorcerers***, and ***whoremongers***, *and* ***murderers***, *and* ***idolaters***, *and whosoever **loveth** and **maketh** a **lie.*** (Rev 21:1–8, 27; 22:14–15)

We see from the above, that the Scriptures consistently portray Deity as a God of **Truth** *who **cannot lie,*** while at the same time, Satan is characterized as "a liar from the beginning" (D&C 93: <6 May 1833> 25) and 'the father of lies' and his disciples are placed in the same class.

In keeping with this, the book of Numbers declares:

God is not a man, ***that He should Lie,*** neither the son of man, ***that He should Repent:*** hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good? (Numbers 23:19)

Expressed in other words, unlike most mortals, God is not a liar, nor does He make promises that He does not keep. In Titus it states that God "Cannot Lie" (Titus 1:2), and Hebrews goes so far as to say "that it was Impossible for God to Lie" (Heb 6:18). From beginning to end the Scriptures establish Truth as the **Mark** *of* **Divinity** — it is the Eternal Essence of the Unchangeable God, for all **Truth** is of God! Not only so, but **Truth** is also *the* ***Uncompromised Essence*** of the Divine Church. This is the Affirmation of Sacred Scripture, and the Testimony of all the Prophets, and hence the Doctrine of Joseph, that "It is Impossible for a man to be Saved in Ignorance" (D&C 131: <16, 17 May 1843> 6). Or as he expressed it on another occasion: "A man is saved ***no faster than he gets Knowledge***, for *if he does not get* ***Knowledge***, he will be brought into Captivity by some Evil Power" (*TPJS* 217; *HC* 4: <10 April 1842> 588). This is the same doctrine taught by the Savior when he affirmed that 'his disciples would Know the Truth, and that the Truth ***would make them*** Free' (John 8:32). In these statements, Truth and Knowledge are equated as alternate references to the same "Principle". Indeed, as the Prophet's revelation succinctly expresses it: "Truth is Knowledge" (D&C 93: <6 May 1833> 24). It is in view of the values as expressed above that the Latter Day Saints sing the following song:

Truth Eternal, ***Truth Divine,*** In thine Ancient Fulness Shine! Burst the Fetters of the Mind From the Millions of Mankind!

Truth again Restored to Earth, ***Opened with a Prophet's Birth***. Priests of Heaven's Royal Line ***Bear the Keys of Truth Divine!***

Truth shall Triumph as the Light Chases far the Misty Night. Endless Ages own its Sway, Clad in Everlasting Day. (Truth Eternal, by Parley P. Pratt, *Hymns The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* <1979 edition> 189)

The following is yet another song which is sung by the Latter Day Saints:

Oh say, What is **Truth**? *'Tis the Fairest Gem* ***That the Riches of Worlds can Produce,*** And Priceless the Value of **Truth** will be when The Proud Monarch's Costliest Diadem Is counted but Dross and Refuse.

Yes, say, *What is Truth?* ***'Tis the Brightest Prize*** *To* ***which Mortals or Gods*** *can Aspire;* Go search in the Depths where it Glittering Lies Or Ascend in Pursuit to the Loftiest Skies. *'Tis an Aim for the Noblest Desire.*

The Sceptre may Fall from the Despot's Grasp When with winds of Stern Justice he Copes, But *the Pillar of Truth* ***will Endure to the Last,*** And its Firm-rooted Bulwarks outstand the Rude Blast, And the Wreck of the fell Tyrant's hopes.

Then say, *What is Truth?'* ***Tis the Last and the First,*** For the Limits of Time it Steps O'er. Though the Heavens Depart and the Earth's Fountains Burst, Truth, the Sum of Existence, will Weather the Worst, Eternal, Unchanged, Evermore. (Oh Say, What Is Truth?, by John Jaques, *Hymns The Church of Jesus Christ of LDS* <1979 edition> 143)

The Savior stated that: "this is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee, the Only True God . . ." (John 17:3) According to this, Eternal Life is Synonymous

with Knowing God. But how can a man Know God *if he does not* ***Know the Truth!*** Indeed, to Know God presupposes a Knowledge of the Truth, as the Divine Being is a God of Truth, and the Perfect Embodiment of the Same — for Truth and Spirit inseparably connected receiveth a fulness of Joy. From hence cometh God — for God is Truth and God is Love, even the Spirit of Truth and Love that dwelleth within Him. Oh Integrity, thou art a Precious Jewel!

Again, it is stated in scripture that "when he shall Appear, we shall be Like Him" (1 John 3:2), But how shall we be Like God, if when He appears, we are living in Dumb Ignorance of the Divine Principle? Hence the Prophet's great stress on Knowledge and Truth and the Doctrine, that "no man can be saved in ignorance". The Savior equated Eternal Life with Knowing God, but before we can Realize the Reality of this Personal Relationship with Deity, we must First Arrive at a Fundamental Understanding in our own Knowledge of the Truth about God and the Divine Character. And not only must we know and understand the Divine Character, but we must also Comprehend what the Scriptures speak of, when they refer to *"the Mysteries of Godliness"*. We must understand these "Mysteries", and we must Incorporate the Principles thereof into our Own Personal Life. Salvation and Exaltation in the Kingdom of the Father is Predicated upon "the Knowledge of God" and "the Mysteries of Godliness" and the Righteous ***Application*** of these Principles in the Life of the Disciple.

To Know God is to Know the Truth, and no man can Know God without Knowing the Truth. Truth then, is the TouchStone — it is the Fundamental Attribute of Deity. Hence without Knowledge of the Truth, no man hath Eternal Life. Those who Know and Love the Truth, Know and Love God and hath Eternal Life! On the other hand, those who do not Love the Truth, do not and cannot Love God, nor do they Know Him, and hence, hath not Eternal Life. To Love the Truth is to Love God, for He is a God of Truth and Can Not lie. And hence the Divine Promise that those who Seek shall Find, and that those who Knock, to them it shall be Opened:

> ***Ask,*** *and it shall be given you;* ***Seek,*** *and ye shall Find;* ***Knock,*** *and it shall be Opened* unto you: For Every One That Asketh Receiveth; and ***he that Seeketh Findeth;*** and to *him that Knocketh* ***it shall be Opened.*** Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask Bread, will he give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fish, will he give him a Serpent? If ye then, being Evil, know how to give Good Gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give Good Things to them that ask Him? (Matt 7:7–11).

Again, in James it states:

> If any of you lack wisdom, *let him Ask of God,* ***that Giveth to all men Liberally,*** and Upbraideth Not; and it shall be given him. *But let him Ask in Faith,* ***Nothing Wavering.*** For he that Wavereth is like a Wave of the sea Driven with the Wind and Tossed. For

let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. *A Double Minded Man **is Unstable*** In All His Ways. (James 1:5–8)

In keeping with this same Principle, the Lord also indicates that those who say they have ***enough** of the* **Truth**, are saying that they have ***Enough** of **God***, and don't need any more, and then he promises that "from them shall be taken away even that which they have".

To these individuals the Lord gives the following warning:

Wo be unto him that shall say: *We have received **the word of God**, and* we Need No More of the Word of God, *for we have enough!* For behold, thus Saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men *line upon line, **precept upon precept**,* Here a Little and There a Little; and ***blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts***, and lend an ear unto my counsel, *for they shall learn wisdom*; for *unto him that receiveth* I Will Give More; and *from them that shall say, We have enough,* **From Them Shall Be Taken Away** ***even that which they have***. (2 Nephi 28:29–30)

Because they received not ***the love of the truth** . . . **God shall send them** **Strong Delusion**, that they should believe a lie:* That they all might be Damned ***who believed not the Truth*** (2 Thes 2:10–12)

Hear the word of he Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, ***because there is no Truth** . . .* nor Knowledge of God in the land. . . . . Therefore shalt thou Fall in the day, and the Prophet also shall Fall with thee in the night, and I will Destroy thy Mother.

*My people are destroyed for Lack of Knowledge: because thou hast **Rejected Knowledge**,* I Will Also Reject Thee, *that thou shalt be **no priest to me**: seeing thou hast **Forgotten** the **Law** of thy **God**,* I Will Also Forget Thy Children. . . . . And there shall be, *like people, **like priest**:* and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them [according to] their doings. (Hosea 4:1, 5–6, 9)

— The Mysteries of Godliness —

It was a natural Consequence of the Prophet's stress on Knowledge, that he should also encourage the Saints *"to Search into the Mysteries of Godliness"*, that they might obtain perfection. On one occasion he spoke out against certain leaders in the High Council because they reprimanded a member of the Church for delving into the mysteries. The following are some of his remarks that he made on this occasion:

Elder Pelatiah Brown, one of the wisest old heads we have among us, and whom I now see before me, has been preaching concerning the beast which was full of eyes before and behind; and *for this he was hauled up for trial* before the high council. ***I did not like the old man being called up*** FOR ERRING IN DOCTRINE. It looks too much like the Methodists, and not like the Latter-day Saints. . . . I want the liberty of thinking and believing as I please. It feels so good not be trammelled. It does not prove that a man is not a good man because he errs in doctrine.

The High Council undertook to censure and correct Elder Brown, because of his teachings in relation to the beasts. Whether they actually corrected him or not, I am a little doubtful, but don't care. (*HC* 5: <8 April 1843> 340)

Apostle Orson Pratt said:

there is no harm for any man or woman *letting the mind expand* to lay hold upon all that God has revealed, and to ponder upon it, as the ancient children of God did. Nephi says — ***"I ponder upon the things of God continually*** (2 Nephi 4:16) which he has revealed unto me," and there is no harm for us to do the same. *We should not get into* ***that old sectarian notion****, that we have no right to Know anything* about this, that or the other, and that we must not pry into this, that or the other. ***That is an old Sectarian Notion***, which we have *Fought Against* ALL THE DAY LONG, and *we do not want it* TO CREEP INTO THE CHURCH *of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. It is the privilege of its members **TO LET THEIR MINDS EXPAND**, and ***to ponder upon the things of God***, and to Enquire of him, and by and by, when we have prepared ourselves by getting all the Knowledge we possibly can from that which is written, *God will give us more*. (*JD* 16: <28 Dec 1873> 336)

President Brigham Young said:

It is the privilege of all Saints *to grow and increase* ***in understanding***, and to spread abroad. If they receive a little, it is their privilege *to improve upon that little*, ***and so receive more***, until they become **PERFECT** (1 Cor 2:6) in the Lord — knowing and understanding perfectly His ways. Then the Manifestations of His Providence among the children of men cease to be a Mystery to them. (*JD* 2: <23 Oct 1853> 2)

A month before the Prophet's death, he made the following statement:

I advise all [the Saints] to GO ON TO PERFECTION, and ***search Deeper and Deeper*** into the ***MYSTERIES OF GODLINESS***. (*TPJS* 364; *HC* 6: <12 May 1844> 363)

"The ***Mysteries of Godliness"*** are those ***Divine Secrets*** that constitute **DEITY** *as a* **GODLY BEING**. They are the **Principles** by which God ***thinks, acts, and lives***. Not only so, but they are also those same ***Divine Principles*** which we must learn and incorporate into our being, if ever we are to become as God is (1 John 3:1–3) — They are the CARDINAL PRINCIPLES which we must *assimilate* into our Personal Essence, if ever we are to become 'Perfect, as our Heavenly Father is Perfect' (Matt 5:48) — And last of all, they are the ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES which we must *master,* if ever our Minds are to Join in

a Union with God and His Christ, that we might become ***one with them*** as they are already *One With Each Other*. (John 17:11, 21–22)

In the Scriptures we are commanded to be one with God, but how can we be one with God if we do not know Him, or if we have no knowledge of what He is, or how He thinks or lives. Indeed, it is impossible for us to become one with God if we do not understand Him, for *no man can rise **above** his **own concept of nobility**.* Hence, the "**Mysteries** *of* **Godliness**" are the *essential ingredient* of "**Eternal Life**" — for "this is **Life Eternal**, that they might **Know Thee** *the* **Only True God**, and **Jesus Christ**, whom thou hath sent." (John 17:3) And just so the Prophet Joseph Smith admonished the Saints: "to Go On To Perfection, and ***search Deeper** and **Deeper** into the* **Mysteries** *of* **Godliness**." (*TPJS* 364; *HC* 6: <12 May 1844> 363)

The Scriptures inform us that we know the things of man by the Spirit of man, and that in contrast to this, we know the things of God by the Spirit of God. We are also informed that Man does not think as God thinks, for God's wisdom is foolishness to man and man's wisdom is foolishness to God — Hence, *it is only through God and the **Spirit of God*** that we can learn the Divine Secret *of the **Mysteries of Godliness**.* In keeping with this, the Doctrine and Covenants teaches:

If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive ***Revelation** upon **Revelation**,* Knowledge Upon Knowledge, *that thou mayest Know the **Mysteries** and **Peaceable Things*** — that which bringeth Joy, *that which bringeth **Life Eternal**.* (D & C 42: <9 Feb 1831> 61)

On another occasion the Lord said:

For *I delight in those who Seek Diligently to Know my Precepts, **and Abide by the Law of My Kingdom**;* for **All Things** *shall be* **Made Known** *unto* **Them** in mine own due time, *and in the end **they shall have Joy**.* (*TPJS* 257; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1842> 136)

Again, in another Revelation the Lord stated:

Seek not for Riches but for Wisdom, and behold, ***the Mysteries of God** shall be Unfolded unto you,* and then shall you be made Rich. Behold, He That Hath Eternal Life Is Rich. (D&C 6: <April 1829> 7)

In keeping with these statements, the Book of Mormon teaches:

It is given unto many to know *the **Mysteries of God**;* nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him. And therefore, ***he that will harden his heart**, the same receiveth the **lesser portion** of the **word**; and he that will not harden his heart,* to him is given the Greater Portion ***of the word**,* until it is given unto him to know the **Mysteries** *of* **God** ***until he know them in full**.* And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given *the lesser portion* of the word ***until they know nothing*** concerning his mysteries; and

then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell. (Alma 12:9–11)

Howbeit we speak wisdom *among them that are perfect:* yet not the wisdom of this world . . . . But we speak the wisdom of God ***in a mystery,*** Even the Hidden Wisdom, ***which God ordained before the world unto our glory****:* Which *none of the princes of this world knew:* . . . . But it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, ***the things which God hath prepared*** For Them That Love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us ***by his Spirit****:* for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things of God*. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so ***the things of God knoweth no man,*** but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, ***but the Spirit which is of God;*** that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, ***not in the words*** *which man's wisdom teacheth,* but which the Holy Ghost Teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But ***the natural man*** *receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God: *for they are foolishness unto him:* neither can he know them, because ***they are spiritually discerned***. (1 Cor 2:6–14)

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. . . . *hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* For after that in the wisdom of God *the world by wisdom* ***knew not God,*** it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. . . . Because *the foolishness of God* ***is wiser than men;*** and *the weakness of God* ***is stronger than men.*** For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, and not many noble, are called; *But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world* ***to confound the wise;*** and God hath chosen the Weak Things of the World *to confound the things which are mighty;* And base things of the world, and ***things which are despised****, hath God chosen,* yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are (1 Cor 1:19–29)

— Cast Not that which is Holy Unto Dogs —

The scriptures teach that he that hath been warned should warn his neighbor. They also teach that God will require at the hands of every man who knows the Truth, that he cleanse his skirts by bearing witness to the generation in which he lives (D&C 88: <27 Dec 1832> 81–82; *UPR* 79: <26 Jan 1880> 12–14). But while it is true that we have been commanded to share the Gospel, we have also been instructed not to cast that which is Holy unto dogs. As it is expressed in the Joseph Smith Translation:

And ***the mysteries of the kingdom*** *ye shall keep within yourselves;* for it is not meet ***to give that which is holy*** unto the Dogs; neither cast ye your pearls unto swine, ***lest they trample them under their feet***.

For the world cannot receive *that which ye, yourselves are not able to bear;* wherefore ye shall not give your pearls unto them, ***lest they turn again and rend you***. (JST Matt 7:10–11)

In the Gospel of Mark, the following is recorded:

And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, *Unto you it is given to know* The Mystery Of The Kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: *That seeing they may see,* ***and not perceive****; and hearing they may hear,* ***and not understand*** (Mark 4:10–12; Luke 8:10)

Again, the Gospel of Matthew states:

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because *it is given unto you to know* the Mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, ***but to them it is not given***. *For whosoever hath,* ***to him shall be given****,* and he shall have more abundance; *but whosoever hath not,* From Him Shall Be Taken Away ***even that*** *[which]* ***he hath***. *Therefore speak I to them in parables:* because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For *this people's heart is waxed gross,* and their ears are ***dull of hearing****,* and ***their eyes*** they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. (Matt 13:10–16)

Again, this same message is repeated in the Doctrine and Covenants:

unto you it is given to know ***the mysteries of the kingdom****,* but unto the world *it is not given to know them*. (D & C 42: <9 Feb 1831> 65)

In keeping with this directive, the Prophet instructed the missionaries that they were not to teach the Mysteries in the Mission Field:

Oh, ye elders of Israel, hearken to my voice; and when you are sent into the world to preach, tell those things you are sent to tell; preach and cry aloud, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel." *Declare the first principles,* ***and let mysteries alone****,* lest ye be overthrown. Never meddle with the visions of beasts and subjects you do not understand. Elder Brown, when you go to Palmyra, say nothing about the four beasts, but preach those things the Lord has told you to preach about — repentance and baptism for the remission of sins. (*TPJS* 292; *HC* 5: <8 April 1843> 344)

Even though it is true that the Higher Principles were taught privately in Nauvoo, still they were never publicly espoused until the Saints were driven

into the seclusion of the mountain wilderness of Deseret, where many of them (though not all) were finally revealed to the Saints, and declared to the world. But even then, President Young had to deal with the Swine element. As Apostle John Taylor expressed it on one occasion:

> Mankind is, more or less, fond of paraphernalia, show, pomp, and parade; *but the kingdom of God* ***does not always come with "observation,"*** as the scripture says. The Great *and* Precious Principles *of* Eternal Truth, *like pearls and precious gems,* are often hid from the view of the human family.
>
> What is the reason that the world of mankind do not appreciate the principles that are so plain . . . to us? . . . . . It is . . . because they cannot see and understand. The light shown in darkness and it comprehended it not; but to those who received it, ***it was life*** and ***salvation***.
>
> Why is it that a swine cannot discern the value of pearls, and tramples them under its feet? ***Because it does not understand,*** *— it has not the intelligence,* and does not comprehend the difference between the filth that surrounds it and precious gems. You might cast a precious jewel at a hog, and it would turn and rend you; but throw that to *a man of understanding* ***and intelligence,*** and he would Ask For More. That is the difference. God has so ordained that ["]strait shall be the gate, and narrow the way that leads to life; and ***but few there are that find it.****"* (Matt 7:13–14) (*JD* 5: <23 Aug 1857> 145)

President Young made another similar statement:

> Suppose you had a diamond of the finest water, as large as my fist, and worth millions of pounds sterling, and you gave it to one who did not know its value, ***he would put it in the mud****, as quick as he would a potatoe* (*JD* 2: <3 June 1855> 308)

Initially one of the reasons why the Brethren of the Priesthood stopped teaching the higher principles of the Gospel was because of the invasion of the Territory by the Gentile element. Seemingly the more Gentiles that poured into the Territory, and the More Power they Gained, the Less the Higher Principles were Taught.

Heber C. Kimball made a fitting description of the invasion of the Great Salt Lake Valley by the Gentiles as he related a dream he had received. By relating this dream in conjunction with the statements previously quoted, it becomes easy to understand why some of the higher doctrines of the gospel were not perpetuated:

> I dreamed that there was an awful flood, and that the flood-wood ***had stopped up the stream***. I watched it; and after a while the flood-wood gave way, and it came down Emigration Kanyon, and went in a southwesterly direction. I then looked round to see what the effects were, and all at once *this whole city and adjacent country* ***became full of hogs***. I spoke to the President and the brethren who were with him, and said — "The country is Full of Hogs," and they were frothing at the mouth *just like mad hogs do;* and I saw them running after the brethren, who got on the walls and fences in different directions, and they were jumping up at them. . . . . (*JD* 8: <6 Oct 1860> 251)

This dream should be understood in the context of the Utah War and the entrance of the army into the Valley, the subsequent establishment of Camp Floyd west of the Oaker Mountains, and its later departure with the early beginnings of the Civil War. Nevertheless, 15 years later the hogs returned with a renewed interest in the Kingdom of God. And from that day to this the hogs have continued to gain more and more influence. Not only so but as time has past, it has become difficult to discern the difference between the Lord's "peculiar people" and the swine that have since become their neighbors and friends. In the early beginnings of this situation, the Saints found themselves obligated to adopt an attitude advocated by Christ to the Saints of his day, who were in the same predicament:

> Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. (Matt 10:16)

In other words, be discreet in what you say and do. Yet notwithstanding these many directives, according to Prophecy, the time must come when the mysteries shall be revealed to the world. As the Book of Mormon expresses it: "kings shall shut their mouths", "for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (3 Nephi 20:45). The following statement speaks of the early beginnings of this revelatory onslaught of knowledge being poured down from Heaven upon the heads of the Latter Day Saints:

> God shall give unto you Knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the Unspeakable Gift of the Holy Ghost, that *has not been revealed since the world was* until now; Which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in *the last times,* which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory; ***A time to come in the which*** Nothing Shall Be Withheld, *whether there be* One God or ***Many Gods***, *they shall be manifest*. All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth ***upon all who have endured valiantly*** for the gospel of Jesus Christ. And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars — All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed *in the days of the* ***dispensation of the fulness of times*** — According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of ***all other gods*** before this world was, *that should be reserved unto the finishing and* ***the end thereof***. . . . . As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints. (D&C 121: <20 March 1839> 26–33)

We see from the above, that notwithstanding the existence of the Swine element from without, of necessity, ***according to Prophecy,*** there must come

a time when the Elect will hear the word of the Lord, and ***the Fulness of*** the Father's Gospel (3 Nephi 16:10–12). And just so, President Young expressed himself on one inspired day in October of 1854:

> I expect in my remarks I shall allude to things that you search after *as being absolutely necessary* ***for your salvation*** in the Kingdom of God. . . . .
>
> In the first place . . . . I request that I may have your faith and prayers united with mine that whatever the Lord is pleased to give to the Latter-day Saints through your humble servant this afternoon, ***He may give it****, and that He does not wish to give* He May Retain, and Keep From You. I make this request of the Saints for this reason; I know by my experience, by the visions of eternity that God reveals things to individuals ***that does not belong to the Church at large*** At Present, or that *does not* Yet *belong to the Mass*. That I know. . . . . .
>
> Again, the Lord blesses His people with temporal things in abundance, and wishes to bless them *with* Knowledge and Understanding ***that is not for the world of mankind*** *who do not believe in Him.* That I also know.
>
> I may say things this afternoon *that does not belong to the world.* What if I do? I know the Lord is able to close up every person's mind who have eyes but see not, hearts but do not understand; So I May Say What I Please *with regard to the Kingdom of God* on the Earth, ***for there is a veil over the wicked*** *that they cannot understand* the things which are for their peace.
>
> Jesus said at one time, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs." (Matt 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30) This saying applies to all the dispensations that has been brought forth to the children of men from the days of Adam until now. (*TPBY* 3: <8 Oct 1844> 343–344)

— The Traditions of Men —

Aside from the inherent problems of the Swine Factor, there were also other difficulties with which the Prophet had to grapple, in establishing the higher laws of God. These, however, rather than having to do with the Gentiles, had to do with the Saints themselves. Paul speaks of this same problem in the New Testament:

> And I, brethren, *could not speak unto you as unto spiritual,* ***but as unto carnal****, even as unto babes* in Christ. ***I have fed you with milk,*** and Not With Meat: for hitherto *ye were not able to bear it,* neither yet now are ye able. (1 Cor 3:1–2)

Paul here states that the meat of the Gospel was so difficult to understand that the Saints of his day were not able to hear or bear it. We have already seen

that the Prophet expressed a strong desire for the Saints to learn the things of God. Yet just as Paul stated it above — so also it was with the Prophet. It is obvious from his speeches, that he felt reluctant to teach the deeper doctrine to the Saints. As the Prophet expressed his exasperation on one occasion: "there are so many fools in the world for the devil to operate upon, it gives him the advantage oftentimes" (*TPJS* 331; *HC* 6: <21 Jan 1844> 184). One must conclude from statements which he made that his uneasy feeling was founded in the fact that the higher principles would contradict the *traditional understanding* of the Saints — and that Steeped In Tradition as they were, *they would reject the Higher Laws of God* in order to maintain a previous understanding. That the Higher Principles of the Gospel would come in contact with the traditional beliefs of the Saints is self evident from the words of the Prophet. Consider the following:

> But I beg leave to say unto you, brethren, that ***ignorance, superstition*** and ***bigotry*** *placing itself where it ought not* is oftentimes in the way ***of the prosperity*** of this Church; (*TPJS* 138; *HC* 3: <25 March 1839> 296)

Again on another occasion the Prophet stated:

> If I was to reveal to this people *what the Lord has revealed to me* ***there is not a man or woman*** would stay with me. (Joseph Smith statement, as quoted by President Brigham Young (*JD* 9: <25 May 1862> 294)

Such statements make us wonder and question what it was that the Lord had revealed to him that was so different to the common understanding and tradition — so contrary, that were he to reveal or divulge it to others, not a man nor a woman in the Church would stay with him?

Again, on still another occasion the Prophet stated:

> Had I inspiration, revelation, and lungs to communicate what my soul has contemplated in times past, ***there is not a soul in this congregation*** but would go to their homes and shut their mouths in everlasting silence on religion *till they had learned something*.
>
> Why be so certain that you comprehend the things of God, *when all things with you* ***are so uncertain***. (*TPJS* 320; *HC* 5: <13 Aug 1843> 530)

At another time the Prophet stated:

> If the Church knew all the commandments, ***one-half*** *[of them]* ***they would condemn*** through Prejudice and Ignorance. (*TPJS* 112; *HC* 2: <6 April 1837> 477)

It was in view of this condition of things that the Lord made the following statement to the Church at large in a Revelation which he gave to the Prophet in May of 1831:

Behold, YE ARE LITTLE CHILDREN and ye cannot bear all things now; ye must [first] grow in grace and ***in the knowledge*** *of the* TRUTH. (D&C 50: <May 1831> 40)

Again a year later the Lord reaffirmed the same status for the Saints:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, YE ARE LITTLE CHILDREN, *and* ***ye have not as yet understood*** *how great blessings the Father hath in his own hands and prepared for you;* ***And ye cannot bear all things now***; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours. And *he who receiveth all things with thankfulness* ***shall be made glorious****;* (D&C 78: <March 1832> 17–19)

It was in view of this same condition among the Saints and the world at large that the Prophet made the following statement on the day of his martyrdom:

It is not always wise to relate ALL THE TRUTH. *Even Jesus, the Son of God, had to refrain from doing so,* ***and had to restrain His feelings*** many times for the safety of Himself and His followers, and had to conceal the righteous purposes of His heart *in relation to many things* ***pertaining to His Father's kingdom***. (*TPJS* 392; *HC* 6: <27 June 1844> 608)

Yet in spite of the Prophet's frustration, as expressed above, still he continued to affirm that:

any person who is exalted to the highest mansion *has to abide* ***a celestial law,*** *and* THE WHOLE LAW TOO.

But there has been a ***great difficulty*** in getting anything into the heads of this generation. It has been like splitting hemlock knots with a corn dodger for a wedge, and a pumpkin for a beetle. *Even the Saints* ***are slow to understand.***

I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, [they] *will fly to pieces like glass* ***as soon as anything comes*** that is CONTRARY *to their* **TRADITIONS**: they cannot stand the fire at all. How many will be able to abide A CELESTIAL LAW, and go through ***and receive their exaltation,*** I am unable to say, *as many are called*, ***but few are chosen***. (*TPJS* 331; *HC* 6: <21 Jan 1844> 184–185)

Again on another occasion the Prophet said:

Those who limit the designs of God as concerted by the Grand Council of Heaven *cannot obtain the knowledge of God*, and [must, therefore, remain in darkness.] I do not know [that it would be wise to say much — indeed there are some things which are not lawful to utter][†] but I may say [that] *all those who are disposed to set up stakes for the Almighty* ***will come short*** of the Glory of God — they will drink in THE DAMNATION OF THEIR SOULS. [In order] to become a joint heir of the heirship of the Son, [a man] must put away **ALL HIS TRADITIONS** [and live by every word that proceedeth forth from out of the mouth of God]. (New Amalgamated Text of the Prophet's 27 August 1843 Discourse on Priesthood; to be published in a future issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*)

[†] *TPJS* 247; *HC* 5:<15 Jun 1842> 30; *TPJS* 305; *HC* 5: <21 May 1843> 402; *TPJS* 323; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1843> 556; D&C 76: <16 Feb 1832> 115; 2 Cor 12:4

In the *History of the Church* the word "false" is added to the text of the above speech, making the Prophet to say that a man must "put away all his *false* traditions". The Prophet's remarks were not fully reported and to be sure such a statement requires a context, but in light of the Restored Gospel and the over all contradiction which it serves to "Gentilism", what uninspired man has the wisdom to discern his "false" traditions from "true". Indeed, a thoughtful consideration of the Prophet's teachings and activities will reveal that he meant just what he said — that is, 'to become a joint heir of the heirship of the Son we must put away ***'all** our traditions'*. The all important context as manifest in other of his speeches and statements of that time, is essentially that we must let go of our traditions and allow ourselves to be Divinely led through the Guidance of the Priesthood and Revelation from Heaven. In other words, we should put away all our traditions and then as the Prophet often stated on other occasions, we should "live by every word that proceedeth forth from out of the mouth of God"‡ Or, as the Prophet expressed himself 7 months later:

> I Advise all to go on to Perfection, and search Deeper and Deeper into the Mysteries of Godliness. A man can do nothing for himself unless God direct him in the right way; and the Priesthood is for that purpose. (*TPJS* 364; *HC* 6: <12 May 1844> 363)

We can see from this that *"traditional Christianity"* is not a worthy guide for those who would obtain the "highest heaven."* Indeed, the Restored Gospel as affected through the Prophet Joseph Smith in this, the last Dispensation has changed all the parameters and for this reason we must put away our "Gentilish Traditions" and seek unto God and His Priesthood for Divine guidance. Not

---

‡Deut 8:3; Matt 4:4; Luke 4:4; Moroni 7:25; *TPJS* 8; *HC* 1: <Nov 1831 — Joseph Smith> 235; D&C 84: <22, 23 Sept 1832> 44; D&C 98: <6 Aug 1833> 11; *HC* Vol. 1: <27 Feb 1834 — William W. Phelps> 483; *Evening and Morning Star* Vol 2: <Mar 1834 — William Phelps> 139; *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate* Vol 1: <Sept. 1835 — John Whitmer> 187; *TPJS* 91; *HC* Vol 2: <12 Nov 1835 — Joseph Smith> 309; *TPJS* 150; *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate* Vol 2: <Mar 1836 — John Whitmer> 287; *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate* Vol 3: <Aug 1837 — Warren A. Cowdery> 555–557; *BYU Studies* Vol. 18: <Summer 1978 — (12 Oct 1837 — Edward Partridge)> 524; *Times and Seasons* Vol. 1 <Nov 1839 — (Benjamin Winchester — 18 June 1839)> 10; *TPJS* 150; *HC* 3: <27 June 1839 — Joseph Smith> 380; *Times and Seasons* Vol. 1: <Feb 1840 — Ebenezer Robinson & Don Carlos Smith> 58; *Times and Seasons* Vol. 2: <1 Mar 1841 — John A. Hicks> 340; *Times and Seasons* Vol.3: <1 Feb 1842 — Luman Heath> 680; *Times and Seasons* Vol. 3: <1 June 1842 — Hyrum Smith> 799; *BYU Studies* Vol. 15: <Summer 1975 — (29 June 1842 — Eliza R. Snow)> 395; *Times and Seasons* Vol.4: <15 Nov 1842 — William Clayton> 10; *Times and Seasons* Vol.4: <15 Feb 1843 — John Taylor> 108; *Times and Seasons* Vol.4: <1 April 1843 — Heber C. Kimball> 155; *HC* Vol.5: <10 April 1843 — John Taylor> 351; *Times and Seasons* Vol.4: <15 April 1843 — John Taylor> 191; *Times and Seasons* Vol.4: <15 May 1843 — Willard Richards> 199; *TPJS* 306; *HC* 5: <22 May 1843 — Joseph Smith> 404; HC Vol 5: <6 Aug 1843 — Joseph Smith> 526; *Times and Seasons* Vol.5: <1 May 1844 — Joseph Smith> 512)

**TPJS* 247, 323, 303; *WJS* 214; *HC* 5:392; 2 Cor 12:2; 1 Cor 15:39–42; D&C 131:1–4]

only so, but according to our Lord and Savior, even much of what is to be found in the Law of Moses has been fulfilled and must therefore, also be put away by those who would live the "Highest Law".

Let us consider some of the differences between the doctrine of the Restoration and that of Traditional Christianity. To begin with there is the Traditional Concept of Heaven and Hell as contrasted to the Prophet's Vision of the Three Degrees of Glory, the Celestial, Terrestrial and Telestial Kingdoms. Then there is the Traditional Doctrine of the Trinity and the Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient or all knowing God, as Contrasted to the Prophet's teachings on the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as three separate beings who are forever going foreward into Eternal Progression in all things. There is strict Monotheism as opposed to the Polytheism of the Prophet — the whole concept of God as an Exalted Man — the concept of man as an Eternal Being and his Preexistent Life as a Spirit Child of God, together with his ultimate Exaltation as a God. Then there is the Restored doctrine of the foreordained Fall of Adam and the necessity for opposition in all things — the traditional belief in Marriage until death in contrast to the Prophet's doctrine on Eternal Marriage and even Plural Marriage. And last but not least there are the Prophet's teachings on Theocratic Government through the Priesthood. In short the whole concept of God, man, the Fall, the Judgment, Heaven and Hell is totally changed. We can therefore see how it is that we must put away ***all*** *our Traditions* and live by Every Word of God as revealed through the *inspired guidance* ***of the Priesthood***.

In keeping with the above, in 1873 President Young spoke directly to the point of the negative power of "tradition" upon the minds of those who would otherwise be recipients of the gospel:

> The Lord has revealed His Gospel and instituted its ordinances *that the inhabitants of the Earth* ***may be put in possession*** of Eternal Life. ***But few of them****, however, will accept it.* I have preached it to many thousands of them who are naturally just as honest as I am, But Through Tradition there is an overwhelming prejudice in their minds which debars them of that liberty I have in my heart. They would be glad to know the ways of God, and to know who Jesus is, and to reap the reward of the faithful, if they had the stamina, I will call it, ***the independence of mind*** *necessary to embrace the truth,* to say, "I know this is true, and *if there is no other person* on the face of this earth who will defend it, I Will To The Last." But this is not in their hearts, it is not in their organization, consequently they do not manifest it. (*Deseret News* Vol 22: <18 June 1873> 308–309; see also *Journal of Discourses* 19: <19 Aug 1877> 91)

Consider what the Prophet Joseph Smith said about angels who are damned in their progression as a consequence of their failure to put away the traditions of their fathers in their former estate:

> Angels desire to look into [the mysteries of Godliness] ***but they have set up too many stakes***. [Therefore, when they are out of their probationary state they are ap-

pointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory. *For these angels* ***did not abide my law****;* therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever. (D & C 132: <12 July 1843> 16–17)]

Men will set up stakes and say ***thus far will we go*** and No Farther. *Did Abraham* ***when called upon*** to Offer his Son [Isaac? (Gen. 22:1–13) No he did not!] **Did the Saviour** [when called upon to sacrifice his life]? (Matt. 26:39) No! View him . . . on the Mount transfigured before Peter, [James] and John (Matt. 17:1–9), there receiving the Fulness of Priesthood or the [Fulness of the] Law of God — setting up no stake, but coming right up to the mark in all things. . . . .

When God offers a ***blessing*** *or* ***knowledge*** *to a man* and he Refuses to Receive It, ***he will be damned*** — the Israelites pray[ed] that God would speak to Moses and not to them in consequence of which He cursed them with a carnal law (Exodus 20:18–24*). God cursed the children of Israel* ***because they would not receive*** the Last Law *from Moses* — [certain] offerings, sacrifices and carnal commandments was added [to the law] in consequence of transgression and they that did them [i.e. those that transgressed in the day of Moses — together with those today who refuse to receive ***God's highest law***] should live by them [— i.e. they should live by the Law of Moses].

The sacrifice required of Abraham by the offering of Isaac (Gen. 22:1–13), *shows that* if a man would attain ***to the Keys of the Kingdom of an Endless Life*** he Must Sacrifice All Things. View the Son of God at saying . . . "if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless Thy will be done" (Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42).

* * * * * *

The Mystery, Power and Glory of the Priesthood is so great and glorious that [without revelation, it is beyond the capacity of mortal man to comprehend. Even] the angels [have] desired to understand it and could not. [And] why? *Because of* ***the tradition*** *of them and their fathers* [— because of this, they] set . . . up stakes and . . . [refused to] com[e] . . . up to the mark [when] in their probationary state. (A New Amalgamated Text of the Prophet's 27 August 1843 Discourse on Priesthood, to be published in a future issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*)

In keeping with these many statements by the Prophet, President Young said the following:

I recollect, in Far West, Joseph, talking upon these matters, [when he] said — "The people cannot bear the revelations that the Lord has for them. There were a great many revelations if the people could bear them." (*JD* 18: <23 June 1874> 242)

President Heber C. Kimball once stated:

no man can speak to a congregation of people upon any subject, only according to the intelligence that is in the people. There are quite a number of this congregation who knew Joseph Smith the Prophet, and he used to say in Nauvoo that when he came before the people he felt as though ***he were enclosed in an iron case****,* his mind was

closed *by the influences that were thrown around him;* he was curtailed in his wishes and desires to do good; there was no room for him to expand, hence *he could not make use* ***of the revelations of God*** *as he would have done;* there was no room in the hearts of the people To Receive The Glorious Truths Of The Gospel ***that God revealed to him***. I refer to these things to show that this feeling has been experienced by others as well as myself, and if as great and good a man as the Prophet Joseph felt like this, no wonder that I should be affected and be wrought upon by surrounding influences. (*JD* 10: <27 June 1863> 233–234)

In keeping with this same thought, Apostle Wilford Woodruff said:

Brother Joseph used a great many methods of testing the integrity of men; and *he taught a great many things* ***which in consequence of tradition***, required prayer and faith, and *a testimony from the Lord*, before they could be believed by many of the Saints. His mind was opened ***by the visions of the Almighty***, and the Lord taught him many things *by vision and revelation* ***that were never taught publicly*** in his day; for the people Could Not bear the Flood of Intelligence ***which God poured into his mind***. (*JD* 5: <9 April 1857> 83–84)

Apostle John Taylor made another similar statement:

If we . . . look back to where we came from, examine our present position and see the depravity, ignorance and corruption that exists where we have come from and that yet exists among us, it is evident that *some great revolution,* ***some mighty change has got to transpire*** To Revolutionize Our Minds, *our feelings* and *judgment,* our pursuits and action, and, in fact, to control and influence us throughout, before anything of this kind can take place, and hence it is when the light of heaven comes to reflect upon the human mind, when we can see ourselves as God sees us and comprehend ourselves as he comprehends us, and understand our position as he understands it, we should have different views of ourselves than we have when unenlightened by the Spirit. No wonder that *Joseph Smith should say that* ***he felt himself shut up in a nutshell,*** there was no power of expansion, *it was difficult for him* ***to reveal and communicate*** The Things Of God, because there was no place to receive them. What he had to communicate *was so much more comprehensive,* ***enlightened and dignified*** than that which the people generally knew and comprehended, *it was difficult for him to speak;* ***he felt fettered and bound,*** so to speak, in every move he made, and so it is to the present time. Yet this being a fact and these being part of the things we expect to accomplish, There Must Be A Beginning somewhere; and if the chips do fly once in a while when the hewer begins to hew, and if we do squirm once in a while it is not strange, because it is so difficult for the people to comprehend the things which are for their benefit. *We have been brought up* ***so ignorantly*** *and our ideas and views* Are So Contracted ***it is scarcely possible*** *to receive the things of God* as they exist in his bosom.

It is easy for us to talk about heaven, and about going to Jackson county, and about building up the kingdom of God, &c.; *it is easy to sing about it* ***and pray about it,*** but it is Another Thing To Do It; and hence the difficulty the servants of God labor under all the day long is in consequence of the ignorance, weakness and infirmities of

those they have to do with, and yet we are more enlightened in regard to these things than any other people and have made more progress; yet how far we come short. (*JD* 10: <6 April 1863> 147–148)

Apostasy at Nauvoo Caused by the Revelation and Practice of the Higher Principles of the Gospel

In keeping with the disposition of the Saints as described above, on several occasions Joseph stated that when the Higher Principles of the Gospel became known, some of the most prominent men in the Church, even members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, would reject it, so strongly would it cross their feelings. Nancy Tracy, who was an early member of the Church, made the following statement:

I heard [Joseph Smith] . . . say at one time on the stand in the grove on the brink of the hill where they held meetings, "if I could make known to these (turning to those that sat behind him) that pretend to be my best friends, what my God has revealed to me, they would be the first to seek my life." Among those who sat there were William Law and [William] Marks (A Short Sketch of the Life and Travels of Nancy N[aomi Alexander] Tracy, typescript p. 16, Special Collections, BYU Library)

Again as Benjamin F. Johnson expressed it:

Criticism *had already commenced* ***by those near to him in authority***, with regard to his teachings and **his doings**. And we began now, in a degree, to understand the meaning of what he had *so often publicly said*, [—] that, *should he* ***teach*** *and* ***practice*** *the* ***principles*** *that the Lord had revealed to him,* and Now Required of Him, that *those then nearest him in the stand* ***would become his enemies*** and **the First to Seek his Life**; (*Unpublished Revelations* 61: <Oct 1903> 30–31)

In keeping with Johnson's statement, consider the following remarks that were made by the Prophet:

Many men will say, "I will never forsake you, but will stand by you at all times." *But the moment you teach them some of* ***the mysteries of the Kingdom of God*** that are retained in the heavens and are to be revealed to the children of men *when they are prepared for them*, ***they will be the first to stone you*** and Put You to Death. It was this same principle *that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ,* and will cause the people to Kill the Prophets in this generation. (*TPJS* 309; *HC* 5: <11 June 1843> 424)

In continuing the Prophet stated:

It always has been *when a man was sent of God* **With the [the Fulness of the] Priesthood** and *he began to preach the fullness of the gospel*, that he was thrust out by his friends, who are all ready to butcher him ***if he teach things*** Which They Imagine to be Wrong; and ***Jesus was crucified upon this principle***. (*TPJS* 310; *HC* 5: <11 June 1843> 425)

— Those Who Will Not Learn —

The Scriptures are replete with warnings of condemnation to those who reject the Gospel because of their traditions, narrow-mindedness and lack of the Spirit of God. The Saints have generally applied these scriptures to those who were never baptized or never joined the Church when it was offered to them. However the Prophet applied them to the members of the Church, who had received the First Principles of the Gospel, but who would not receive its Fulness. Consider for example the following statement which he made on the 11th of June 1843:

Many things are insoluble to the children of men in the last days: for instance . . . forgetting ***that things have been hid*** from before the foundation of the world, which are to be revealed to babes in the last days. [But] there are a great many wise men and women too in our midst who are Too Wise to be Taught; therefore ***they must die in their ignorance***, and in the resurrection they will find their mistake***. Many seal up the door of heaven*** by saying, so far God may reveal and I will believe [but no farther]. (*TPJS* 309; *HC* 5: <11 June 1843> 424)

On another occasion the Prophet stated:

When things that are of the greatest importance are passed over by the weak-minded men without even a thought, I want to see Truth in all its bearings and hug it to my bosom. I believe all that God ever revealed, *and I never hear of a man being damned* ***for believing too much*** [of what God has revealed]; But they are **Damned for Unbelief**. (*TPJS* 374; *HC* 6: <16 June 1844> 477)

Again, in continuing with the Prophet's earlier statement, he went on to say:

Any man may believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be happy in that belief, ***and yet not obey his commandments*** (John 14:15, 21; 15:10), and at last be Cut Down **for Disobedience** (D&C 35:12) to the Lord's righteous requirements. (*TPJS* 311; *HC* 5: <11 June 1843> 426)

In keeping with this, one of the Revelations given to the Prophet states:

There are none that doeth good except those who are ready to receive the fulness of my gospel (D & C 35: <Dec 1830> 12)

On Yet another occasion, the Prophet said:

I . . . spoke to the people, showing them that to get salvation *we must not only do some things, **but everything*** which God has commanded. Men may preach and practice everything except those things which God commands us to do, and [they] will be damned at last. We may tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and still not obey the commandments of God. The object with me ***is to obey*** and [to] teach others ***to obey God*** in just what He tells us to do. *It mattereth not* Whether **the Principle** *is popular or unpopular*, I will always maintain a true principle, **Even If I Stand Alone In It**. (*TPJS* 332; *HC* 6: <21 Feb 1844> 223)

The Revelation of Things Never Before Revealed

The above statements should serve as a warning to the Saints of this generation, that they ought to prayerfully consider things before rejecting a doctrine on the grounds of tradition. Indeed, it is evident from the Prophet's own words that the Higher Principles and Doctrine of the Kingdom will not be what the Saints expect. He plainly taught that in this dispensation, there would be many things revealed to the common man which had previously been kept hid from before the foundation of the world. Obviously it is these things which will contradict the traditions of man, for many of them will not be found written in the Bible, as they have never before been revealed to the world. This is the substance of what is stated in the 9th Article of Faith:

We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and We Believe ***that He will yet reveal*** *many great and important things* pertaining to the Kingdom of God. (Pearl of Great Price <9th Article of Faith — March 1842> 60)

On one occasion the Prophet wrote:

We are called to hold the Keys of the Mysteries of those things *that have been kept hid **from the foundation of the world*** until now. Some have tasted a little of these things, *many of which are to be poured down from heaven **upon the heads of babes***; yea, upon the weak, obscure and despised ones of the earth. Therefore we beseech of you . . .

let honesty, and *sobriety*, and *candor*, and *solemnity*, and Virtue, and Pureness, and *meekness*, and *simplicity* crown our heads in every place; and in fine, become as little children, *without malice, guile or hypocrisy*.

And Now, brethren, after your tribulations, if you do these things, and exercise fervent prayer and faith in the sight of God always*, He shall give unto you* ***knowledge*** *by His Holy Spirit . . .* ***that has not been revealed*** *since the world was* Until Now; which our forefathers have waited with anxious expectation to be revealed ***in the last times***, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as *held in reserve* for the fulness of their glory; a time to come in the which Nothing Shall Be Withheld . . . ***all*** . . . ***shall be revealed***, *in the days of* ***the dispensation of the fullness of times***. (*TPJS* 137–138; *HC* 3: <25 March 1839> 296)

One of the revelations given to the Prophet states:

I design to reveal unto my church ***things which have been kept hid*** *from before the foundation of the world*, things that pertain to the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. (D & C 124: <19 Jan 1841> 41)

— An Open MinD —

President George A. Smith made the following statement:

This is the way men feel; *they are all the time* Afraid of Being Deceived; ***when the truth comes****, they dare not trust their eyes,* ***their ears,*** Or Their Understanding; they are all the day long fearing and trembling ***lest they should be deceived***. And at the same time, Infidelity, Mesmerism, Electrobiology, spiritual communications of various kinds and grades are taking hold of the minds of the human race, from those in the highest ranks of society to the lowest [and yet they will not receive the Revelations of God]. (*JD* 3: <12 Aug 1855> 27)

In the above statement, President Smith speaks to the double standard of the world. People can be skeptical and unbelieving on the one hand, while at the same time they are extremely gullible on the other. This problem exists with the people of the world and it exists among the Latter-day Saints. People can be taught to believe in the Scriptures all their life and to accept them as a matter of faith without question, while at the same time, they are taught to believe in a religion which is largely without Biblical support and for that matter, even contrary to what is plainly written therein. When in later life their faith is challenged, almost invariably they will tenaciously cling to the traditions of their fathers, while at the same time they remain extremely skeptical and hardhearted towards anything that is different. In like manner people can be

converted to the restored Gospel and believe that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, and yet they can deny his revelations, or turn a deaf ear on them, when they run contrary to the traditions that they have grown up with, and this too, even when they are supported by the Bible.

The experience of the Restoration has demonstrated that people are not consistent and that they must be touched or moved by the Spirit of God before they will make significant change or progress in their life. And yet without desire only rarely does the Spirit touch them, and altogether too often, they will not seek unto God with an open mind. Yet this notwithstanding, we must conclude from the Prophet's sayings, that a lack of desire to do right was not the reason the Saints would reject the higher Principles of the Gospel. The Problem for the Saints was that they refused to give anything which contradicted their Traditions a hearing. They refused to accept even the possibility that their traditions might be wrong, and consequently, in the same act, they also refused to accept the possibility that the Principles of the Fulness of the Gospel might be right. In essence, they placed themselves in a position where it was impossible for them to obtain a testimony of the ***truth*** either way on the matter. "According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear" (Romans 11:8). In order to step out of this frame of mind, that we might be enabled to determine the truthfulness of an issue, it is necessary to give a question a fair hearing. Not only so, but we must do this under the influence of God and His Spirit, taking time with an open mind to examine both sides. In other words, we must do as the Lord has commanded us, and "study the question out in our minds" (D&C 9: <April 1829> 7–9). The Law of God requires that a man cannot be condemned as guilty without first receiving a fair trial. The same law also requires that "The accused, in all cases, has a right to one-half of the council, to prevent insult or injustice." (D & C 102: <17 Feb 1834> 15) Why then should we not employ the same basic principles in determining the truthfulness of a Doctrine or Principle — and This Ought Especially To Be So when it concerns ***Doctrine*** *and* ***Principle*** that have been revealed **Through the Channel** ***of the Priesthood!***

On the 17th of February 1847, the Prophet Joseph Smith appeared to President Young in a Vision and gave him a message for the Saints. The Saints were anxious to learn about the Law of Adoption and the ***Principles*** *of* ***Doctrine*** relating to the Sealing Powers of the Priesthood. They wanted to learn about things which they did not understand, but as it was in the case of Celestial Marriage, so also it was in the case of Adoption. The "Law of Adoption" or the "Sealing of Men to Men" as enacted in the Temple is predicated upon the Principles of Social Life and Government, as they exist in the Celestial Kingdom. But as it is clearly stated in scripture, the principles of Social

Life and Government as they exist in Heaven are different from those which exist here on Earth. As a consequence to this, inevitably the traditions of the Saints who had grown up under the cultural influence of "Gentilism" would come in contact with the laws of God. In other words, in some re-spects, the traditional understanding of moral right and moral wrong which the Saints had grown up with in the world would stand in the way of their consideration and comprehension of Celestial Law.

A case in point is the Prophet's effort to court Nancy Rigdon as a plural wife. Nancy had been raised to believe that a man could only have one wife, and that it would be immoral for her to become involved with a man who was already married. In the process of the Prophet's attempt to court her, it became necessary for him to break down some of her Traditions and Social Mores in order to resolve her dichotomy and so he wrote her a letter of explanation. In the process of his remarks he explained: "That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another." And then after bluntly stating that: "Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is", he alluded to certain Biblical practices which he acknowledged "might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven only in part". Finally in attempting to soft-en the impact of his message he affirmed that:

> God has designed our happiness — and the happiness of all His creatures, [and] he never has — He never will institute an ordinance or give a commandment to His people that is not calculated in its nature to promote that happiness which He has designed, and which will not end in the greatest amount of good and glory to those who become the recipients of his law and ordinances. (*TPJS* 256–257; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1842> 134–136)

As indicated above, Celestial Marriage as taught and practiced by the Prophet Joseph Smith involved the matrimony of a man to more than one woman (D&C 132: <12 July 1843> 1–66). This in itself required a great change in Life Style and a Radical Departure from Tradition and the Social Mores of American Society. As if this were not enough, on top of the above was the fact that in accordance with Divine Law, as revealed through the Prophet, it was also mandatory for every Celestially married man and woman to be Sealed or Adopted into the Exalted Family Kingdom of God the Father. In keeping with this, entrance into the DIVINE FAMILY required that the recipients take upon themselves certain Priesthood Oaths in the Temple. These Sacred Covenants involved concepts of GOVERNMENT and UNION, which were to be instituted in the lives of all those who took upon themselves the Covenant. Indeed the living of this COVENANT was inherent in the Law of Adoption and Eternal Marriage — it was at the core of all Eternal Family and the Mainspring of ETERNAL POWER and UNION among the Gods. In the Prophet's day these concepts were variously referred to as "The Principle", or "The Highest Law", or "The Law

of the Fulness of the Priesthood". It was also spoke of as "A Perfect Law of Theocracy". The Practice of the New and Everlasting Covenant of Adoption and Celestial Marriage, as instituted through the ordinances of the Temple, involved a concept of Union and Government between husband and wife and their children in the Priesthood — the living of which required an Enormous Personal Commitment and a commitment too, which was to be continued throughout all Time and Eternity. In the case of Adoption, as well as in the case of Eternal Marriage — the living and practice of the Covenant required a major change in life style and culture. Indeed, "The Principle" was a *quantum leap* away from the Traditional Social Mores of Society. To be sure, it is to be expected that Social Life in Heaven will be different from the "Gentilism" of the world. It is just as the Prophet explained it:

> [In order] to become a Joint Heir of the Heirship of the Son, [a man] must put away all his traditions [and live by every word that proceedeth forth from out of the mouth of God]. ("New Amalgamated Text of the Prophet's 27 August 1843 discourse on Priesthood", to be published in a forthcoming issue of *Doctrine of the Priesthood*)

That the Prophet had a vision of the Celestial Family cannot be denied, but the great problem for the Prophet was sharing that Vision with others — because sharing that Vision required that his listeners "put away ***all their traditions***". Against all this, the tendency of the great body of the Saints would be to turn their back on the Celestial Law. This they would do because of the influence which the Tradition of Their Fathers exerted upon their minds and the *Social Mores* with which they had been familiar since the time of their birth.

As the scriptures say, the things of God are understood by the Spirit of God, and just so understanding the Celestial Law requires *the Vision and Spirit of God* and ***a whole comprehension*** of Doctrine and Principle which the Saints Had Never Before Thought Of. Of necessity, succeeding at such a task would require the gift of the Spirit and the guidance of the Holy Ghost, otherwise they would not be enabled to receive or comprehend the Law, and ultimately their souls would be lost. It is in this context that we see the following doctrine which the Prophet imparted to the Saints when he appeared to President Young in vision. The Prophet instructed the Saints that it was very important for them to keep the Spirit of the Lord. And then he explained to them that in order to be Prepared to receive the Revelations of God, they must keep their minds open to receive "All Spirits", otherwise their minds might be closed so as not to receive the Spirit of God. After this he explained to them how to tell the difference between the Spirit of God and the Spirit of the Devil. This message was given to assist the Saints, that they might open their minds and avoid the pitfall of *rejecting* the Truth because of their Traditions. The following is Brigham's account of this Vision:

I dreamed that I saw Joseph. . . . . I told him that the Latter-day Saints was anxious to know about ***the law of adoption***, ***and the sealing powers*** &c. and desired word of council from him.

Joseph said; "do you be sure and tell the people one thing. Do you be sure and tell the brethren that It Is All Important for *Them to keep the spirit of the Lord, to keep* ***the quiet spirit of Jesus****,"*

And [then] he explained how the spirit of the Lord reflected on the spirit of man and set him to pondering on any subject, and also explained how to know *the spirit of the Lord* from *the spirit of the enemy*.

He said *"****the mind of man must be open to receive all spirits****,* In Order to be Prepared*, to receive the spirit of the Lord,* which **Always Brings Peace** and ***makes one happy*** and Takes Away Every Other Spirit. *When the small still voice speaks*, ***always receive it****,* and if the people will do these things, when they come up to the Father, ***all will be as in the beginning****,* and ***every person stand*** As At The First.*"* . . . . .

I want you all to remember my dream. For I, ***it is a vision of God*** and was revealed through the spirit of Joseph; (*Unpublished Revelations* 67: <17 Feb 1847> 8–18, 20–22)

Herein is the important *Key* for the Saints to remember — it is the *Key* which unlocks the door to Heaven, releasing with it a flood of revelation — it will open the mind of man, that the Spirit of the Lord might come upon him and thus prepare him to receive the things of God. The *Spirit of Joseph* instructed Brigham, "that the mind of man must be open to receive all spirits", both good and evil, "in order to be prepared to receive the Spirit of the Lord, *otherwise it might be bared* so as not to receive the Spirit of the Lord". *A man cannot receive Revelation with a Bared or Closed Mind.* In order for the Saints to be prepared to receive Revelation *pertaining to the Higher Principles of the Gospel,* they must keep their mind open to all Spirits, otherwise their minds may be ***bared from the Truth*** as well as the lie.

Fair Weather Prophets
&
Trusting in The Arm of Flesh

As Latter-day Saints we often sing: "We thank thee, O God, for a Prophet To guide us in these latter days. We thank thee for sending the gospel To lighten our minds with its rays." (*Hymns the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day*

Saints <1979 ed> 196) To be sure, the Gift of Knowledge that Prophets have Bequeathed to humanity is priceless. All Light and Truth where it concerns God and Heaven — the Creation of Man, the Relation we sustain to Deity and the Purpose of Life here on Earth — all information which we have acquired concerning these things has been communicated to us through the Revelation and Vision of Prophets. It is just as the Bible states:

> Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. (Amos 3:7)

Yet all this notwithstanding, as sacred history attests, not all prophets have led their disciples into that "Straight and Narrow Path" which leads to God and Eternal Life. Ezekiel speaks about some of these in his thirteenth chapter:

> The word of Yhwh came to me: [Son of] Man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel "who prophesy ^(out of their own hearts), and say to the prophets . . . Thus said Lord Yhwh:
>
> Woe to the villainous prophets who follow their whims *without having seen a thing*.
>
> Your prophets, Israel, have become ***like jackals among ruins!***. . . .
>
> They utter ***idle visions*** and False Divination — who say, "delcares Yhwh," *when I never spoke,*
>
> So then, thus said Lord Yhwh: Because you have spoken ***idle things*** and uttered False Visions, assuredly, I am coming at you, declares Lord Yhwh. My hand will come upon the prophets who utter ***idle visions*** and who Divine Falsehood; . . . *For* ***the very good reason*** that they Misled My People, saying, "***All is well***," *when* Nothing ***was well***. . . . .
>
> I will spend my fury on . . . Israel's prophets who prophesy about Jerusalem, *those who utter visions of* "All is Well" for it[,] *when* ***nothing is well,*** declares Lord Yhwh. (*The Anchor Bible*, Ezekiel 13:1–16)

In the above prophecy Ezekiel indicts the Prophets of Israel, accusing them of being like jackals among ruins. They make uninspired pronouncements, speaking in Yhwh's name when Yhwh did not speak to them. They make "Fair Weather Prophecies", saying "all is well when nothing is well", and thus they "mislead" the people. In the same chapter Ezekiel impeaches the Prophets for not forewarning and thus preparing Israel against the great onslaught of their enemies. Furthermore, he accuses them of consigning the righteous to death, while at the same time they harbor the wicked and allow them to live and do not call sinners to repentance. Thus they have failed to admonish Israel to righteousness and thereby avert the great day of Yhwh's judgment, wherein Jerusalem will be destroyed and its inhabitants enslaved and carried away into captivity. In keeping with this, in chapter 34, Ezekiel prophecies doom and disaster upon the prophets, whom he characterizes as *"shepherds"* who serve and feed themselves rather than the flock:

The word of Yahweh was addressed to me as follows, 'Son of man, Prophesy Against The Shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them, "Shepherds, the Lord Yahweh says this: ***Disaster*** is in store *for the* ***shepherds*** *of* ***Israel*** Who Feed Themselves! Are not shepherds meant to feed a flock? Yet you have fed on milk. You have dressed yourselves in wool, you *slaughter the choice sheep*, but ***you do not feed the flock.*** You have *failed to make* ***weak sheep strong,*** or to Care for the Sick ones, or *bandage the injured* ones. You have *failed* ***to bring back strays*** or *look for the lost*. On the contrary, you have ruled them Cruelly and Harshly. For lack of a shepherd they have been scattered, to become the prey of all the wild animals . . . . My flock is astray on every mountain and on every high hill; my flock has been scattered all over the world; no one bothers about them and no one looks for them.

"Very well, shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh: As I live, I swear it — declares the Lord Yahweh — since my flock has been plundered and . . . *since my shepherds* ***feed themselves*** Rather Than *my flock*, very well, shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh: The Lord Yahweh says this: Look, I Am Against The Shepherds. I shall *take my flock* ***out of their charge*** and . . . . I shall rescue my sheep from their mouths to stop them from being food for them. (Ezek 34:1–10, NJB, RSV, NIV)

On the heels of Ezekiel's prophecy against prophets, as cited earlier in chapter 13 — in the succeeding chapter, Ezekiel again indicts the prophets, together with those who follow after them. In this case he refers to the Prophets as stumbling blocks:

Some men of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me. The word of Yhwh came to me [saying]: [Son of] Man, these men have raised their idols ***in their thoughts*** [i.e. their gold and silver, fine apparel, homes and comfortable living (Ezekiel 7:19–24)] and set their stumbling-blocks of iniquity before their faces [i.e. their fair weather Prophets who declare "all is well when all is not well" (Ezekiel 44:12)]; am I supposed to respond to their inquiry?

Now speak to them and say to them: Thus said Lord Yhwh: . . . . any man of the house of Israel or of the aliens [i.e. Proselytes] who live in Israel who falls away from me and raises his idols *in his thoughts* and sets his stumbling-block of iniquity *before his face,* ***and comes to a prophet*** to inquire of me by him, I Yhwh will by myself oblige him with an answer. I will set my face against that man; I will make of him a sign and a byword and cut him off from among my people Israel; and you shall know that I am Yhwh.

And if a prophet ***is so misled*** as to speak an oracle, I Yhwh have misled that prophet (2 Thes 2:10–12). I will stretch out my hand against him and destroy him from among my people Israel. *Both shall suffer* ***the same punishment,*** the Inquirer and the Prophet Alike, so that the house of Israel shall no longer stray from me, and no longer defile themselves by all their transgressions. (*The Anchor Bible, Vol. 22*, Ezekiel 14:1–11)

The above oracle from Ezekiel, states that under certain circumstances the Lord God is capable of allowing a Prophet to be misled. This idea brings to mind yet another Prophesy which is found in the 2nd chapter of 2nd Thessalonians:

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not *the love of the Truth,* that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send

them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:10–12)

From the above we learn that the great sin of the wicked is that they "*received not the **love of the truth**"*, but rather that they took "Pleasure in Unrighteousness". It is because of this that "God shall send them *strong delusion,* that they should believe a lie" and the source of this "strong delusion" is "lying spirits" or "evil spirits" which are set loose in the land.

Again as the Prophet Joseph Smith explained it, there are three sources for the spirit of revelation — that is the "Spirit of God, the spirit of man, and the spirit of Devil" (*UPR* Vol 2:41; *WJS* 74; *TPJS* 189). And even in the case of the Prophet Joseph Smith — at times he found it difficult to cease in the persuasions of men. Indeed, it was for this reason that after being told No twice by the Lord, he dared to approach him yet a third time, and all those who are familiar with the events of the Restoration know the consequences — the loss of the Book of Lehi.

In continuing in this same theme, *The Anchor Bible* commentary gives the following statement regarding the above passage from Ezekiel:

> The prophet refrains from charging his audience with open idolatry; *he reads it in their minds*. Modern commentators have interpreted this as an attribution of "syncretism," the worship of Yhwh alongside alleged deities of the popular religion, a kind of "halting between two opinions" — But The Prophet Does Not Say That. Overtly, it would appear, the people's conduct had been *blameless*; indeed had they been idolaters no reason can be found for ignoring it until this moment of recourse to Yhwh. Since when did Yhwh tolerate idolatry in Israel so long as the culprits refrained from seeking his oracles? *That the elders came to Ezekiel for an oracle* shows that ***in their own estimate*** they were True Devotees of Yhwh, worthy of his attention. *God's indignant response **shows how gravely*** he and his people Differ *in their* Conceptions *of the **religious reality***. . . . .
>
> The "idols" in the people's thoughts and "before their faces" must be a Rubric [i.e. a class or category] for *an **unregenerate state of mind***. The assurance, fed by the false prophets, That All Was Well between Israel and Yhwh, *confirmed the people in their course,* a course which, as the exile had proved, Stood Under God's Condemnation. To presume that normal relations existed between Israel and its God in these circumstances was ***infuriating obtuseness***. . . .
>
> The drastic consequences with which both parties to the offense [i.e. the people and their prophets] are threatened underlines ***the fury aroused*** *by the people's* Incomprehension of their Iniquity and their *rejected status* in the eyes of Yhwh (*The Anchor Bible Ezekiel, 1–20 A New Translation With Introduction And Commentary By Moshe Greenberg*, Vol 22:253)

Following the above rebuke, Ezekiel makes a blatant statement wherein he sets forth in certain terms the Personal Responsibility that rests upon

every individual to know and do right for himself and to save his own soul. Even a righteous Prophet will not be able to save the People. On the contrary, a righteous Prophet will only be able to save himself:

> The word of Yhwh came to me: [Son of] Man, if a land sinned against me by committing trespass, and I stretched out my hand against it, and I broke its staff of bread and let famine loose against it, cutting off man and beast from it, and these three men were in it — Noah, Daniel and Job, ***by their righteousness*** **They Should Save Themselves**, declares Lord Yhwh.
>
> If I caused wild animals to pass through the land and bereave it so that it became a desolation with none passing through it because of the animals, *these three [righteous] men being in it,* by my life, declares Lord Yhwh, *they* ***should not*** *save sons or daughters;* They Alone Should Be Saved while the land became a desolation.
>
> Or [if] I brought a sword upon that land, and decreed, A sword shall pass through the land! and I cut off man and beast from it, and *these three [righteous] men* were in it, by my life, declares Lord Yhwh, *they* Should Not ***save a son or a daughter****; by their* ***righteousness*** *they should* ***save*** [Only] Themselves. (*The Anchor Bible* Vol 22 Ezekiel 14:12–20)

The above passage makes it clear that each and every individual will be held ***personally responsible*** for their own life and the choices which they make. Indeed, the whole of the 18th chapter of Ezekiel is devoted to the same theme. All in all, it is declared that those who are saved will be saved by their own righteousness and not simply because they had a godly parent or a prophet-friend to whom they attached themselves. Surely on the great day of Judgment no one will be found riding into the Kingdom of Heaven on the coattail of another heavenly dignitary — not on the coat tail of Noah, Daniel or Job — nor for that matter on the godly merits of the Lord Jesus Christ or the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The commentator in the *Anchor Bible* seems to doubt the accuracy of this assertion. Notwithstanding this, Ezekiel is hardly the only Biblical Prophet to teach that a righteous man, by his own righteous deeds, can only save himself. That this is so is firmly established in the whole Biblical record, for both the New and Old Testament teach the same doctrine — at the Great Day of Judgment it will be just as it is stated in the following passage from the Book of Revelations:

> And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and *the dead were judged* ***out of those things*** *which were written in the books,* According To Their Works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man ***according to their works***. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:12–15)

Not only is the doctrine of Personal Responsibility declared by the Apostles in the later books of the New Testament, but the same teaching is

also found in the earlier books, coming right out of the mouth of Jesus. Indeed the doctrine is declared by the Savior over and over again and is to be found in unmistakable language all over the face of the Gospels. The following example consists of only one among many:

> Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; ***but he that doeth*** The Will Of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, ***I never knew you****: depart from me,* ***ye that work iniquity***. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and Doeth Them, I will liken him unto ***a wise man,*** which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: *for it was founded upon a rock*. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and Doeth Them Not, shall be likened unto A ***foolish man***, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; *and it fell:* and great was the fall of it. (Matt 7:21–27)

Joseph Smith is another of the Prophets who taught the necessity of Personal Responsibility. Not only so, but in the process he read from the 14th chapter of Ezekiel as cited above, and then applied Ezekiel's belated message to the *modern day* Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ***and its leaders***. The occasion was a meeting with the sisters of the Relief Society in the later part of May 1842. No doubt the Prophet's remarks were elicited by the recent exposure of the adulterous conduct of Dr. John C. Bennett with certain women in Nauvoo.

Bennett had experienced a meteoric rise to eminence in Church and City Government among the Saints. Undoubtedly this was because he had been of great assistance to the Prophet in getting the Nauvoo Charter passed through the Illinois state legislature. Among other things this Charter empowered Nauvoo to establish its own courts and to organize the Nauvoo Legion. As a consequence of his service Bennett was elected as Nauvoo's first Mayor — became Chancellor of the University — Major General of the Nauvoo Legion and even Assistant President to the Prophet.

Evidently Bennett became aware of the Prophet's secret doctrine of Plural Marriage which was much whispered about Nauvoo, and made use of the Prophet's name in order to seduce a number of women under the supposed guise of the Prophet's authority, in connection with the doctrine of "Plural Marriage".

It is evident from the Prophet's remarks that he felt bedeviled by the evil use which had been made of his name. No doubt this was especially so in Bennett's case, as he possessed high rank in the Church and was the Prophet's assistant in the Presidency. In order to avoid similar problems in the future, the Prophet resorted to the doctrine of "Personal Responsibility" by citing the revelation

of God as contained in the 14th chapter of Ezekiel. If only the Saints would be responsible enough to do their own thinking and make a personal effort to obtain the guidance of the Spirit, no further evil would be done in the name of the Priesthood. Consider the following statement from the Prophet:

> President Joseph Smith read the 14th chapter of Ezekiel — Said the Lord had declared by the Prophet [Ezekiel], *that the people* Should Each One ***stand for himself***, and *depend on no man or [set of] men* in that state of corruption of the Jewish church — *that* ***righteous persons could only deliver their own souls*** — *applied it to* the Present State of the ***Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*** — said if the people departed from the Lord, They Must Fall — *that they were depending on the Prophet*, ***hence were darkened in their minds***, *in consequence of* Neglecting the Duties ***devolving upon themselves*** (*TPJS* 237–238; *HC* 5: <26 May 1842> 19)

It is apparent from the Prophet's remarks, that some members of the Church had actually *abdicated* their own *personal responsibility* as Adults and *delegated* that Liability to the leaders of the Church. Surely adults ought to do their own thinking. This is, after all, the whole idea of being an adult — to be old enough to know Right from Wrong and experienced enough to make wise decisions — all of which is essential for an individual to be personally responsible for their own actions. In fact, adults who are not so endowed are considered to be incompetent.

We are commanded to be like God in all things. Is God a blind follower! And what kind of Kingdom would God have were it to be filled with such individuals! To be sure, not the heavenly Kingdom of which we read in Scripture. The heavenly Kingdom is the Ultimate dwelling place of the Valiantly Righteous who have Fought the Good Fight and Overcome — not the final resting place of Mindless Puppets and Blind Followers.

It is easy to see the damning influence that blind followers exert upon an institution — especially that of the Divine Church. If the experience of history has taught us anything, surely we must acknowledge that ultimately Blind Followers lend Credence and Power to Wickedness in High Places. Indeed, it is evident that this was the precise state of affairs in the Church at the time the Prophet made the above statement.

In dealing with this problem, the Prophet found it necessary to read from the 14th chapter of Ezekiel and then deliver commentary upon it. In the process of his discourse, he applied the word and will of the Lord as revealed through the Prophet Ezekiel to the present day status of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He declared that 'members of the Church should each one stand for themselves' and that they should not 'depend upon him, nor for that matter, upon any other man or set of men in the Church for their Salvation.'

In keeping with the word and will of the Lord as revealed through Ezekiel, he affirmed that "righteous persons could only deliver their own souls" and then

indicted the Saints 'for depending upon him', saying that they 'were ***darkened in their minds,*** in consequence of Shirking the *personal responsibility* which inherently belonged to every member of the Church'. Every member of the Church ought to possess a fundamental knowledge of Good and Evil — they ought to be wise enough to recognize Right from Wrong and they ought to be Honorable enough to order their own Personal Life accordingly.

Essentially, in making the above statement, the Prophet was decrying the doctrine of Blind Faith in Church Leaders, as it was then being promoted by certain misled individuals, in conjunction with the idea that we should "Trust in the Prophet" and "Follow the Brethren". Therefore, in accordance with the Prophet's warning, we ought not to trust in the Prophet, nor for that matter, in "any other man or set of men in the Church". And yet, notwithstanding the Prophet's warning, this doctrine of Blind Faith has indeed become a pervasive tenet in the Church today. Due to what might be termed spiritual laziness, or a lack of personal responsibility, many members of the Church fail to make the effort to obtain the companionship of the Holy Ghost, or the guidance of the Spirit of God to lead them in their own private life. Rather than striving for the Spirit, these individuals opt instead to place a 'reckless confidence in their leaders, expecting others to answer all life's problems for them and ultimately to lead them forth into the Celestial Kingdom.' If they ask any questions at all, these individuals do not afterwards follow through with their own personal investigation to study out a matter in their own minds, nor do they seek confirmation from the Spirit.

When someone lives this way, it tends to dull their mind, and encourages blind faith and blind following — worst of all, they do not seek to establish a personal relationship with God. Quite to the contrary, rather than this, they channel their mind to what President Young referred to as "one of their poor weak fellow mortals". As we have seen, the 14th chapter of Ezekiel condemns individuals who follow after this kind of lifestyle and even goes so far as to say that such individuals will be shut out of the Kingdom of God and that they will not receive Salvation. It refers to the prophets of such individuals as stumbling-blocks and states that both the people and their prophets will be judged and that they will both receive the same condemnation.

It is interesting that the prevalence of this dogma in the Latter Day Church is Prophetically foretold in the Book of Mormon, where it is referred to as "Trusting in the Arm of Flesh". Without a doubt it is this very dogma of "Trust the Prophet" and "follow the brethren" which encourages men ***to trust in*** The Arm Of Flesh for their salvation; And as the Prophecy declares, when they live by this dogma, they thereby deny themselves *the power of God* in their own personal lives and ***the gift of the Holy Ghost***, which is the Gift of Revelation. As already stated, the Scriptures prophesy that this situation would exist in the latter days and give us the following warning:

Wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion! Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well! Yea, wo be unto him *that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men*, ***and denieth the power of God***, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost! . . . *Cursed is he* ***that putteth his trust in man***, or Maketh Flesh his Arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men*, save their precepts shall be given* ***by the power of the Holy Ghost***. (2 Nephi 28:26–31)

The above warning to the saints of our day is reminiscent of the Parable of Jesus which he gave in relation to the ten virgins:

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. (Matt 25:1–12)

It is evident from the above, that the ten virgins represent the Church and the Saints — they are the brides of Christ who have been invited to the marriage. The darkness of night represents the spiritual darkness in which the world is veiled and the present condition of life here on Earth, while the oil in their lamps represents the Spirit of God, which is to light their way through the darkness. But through neglect and lack of diligence, many of the Saints have not maintained the Divine guidance of the Holy Ghost in their life, and as a consequence, when Christ comes they will be shut out of the Kingdom of God. That this parable is about the Church and the Saints, and the Church and Saints too of the Latter Days, is self evident from a revelation which was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

Hearken, O ye people of my church, ***to whom the kingdom has been given*** . . . And again I say, hearken unto my voice, Lest Death Shall Overtake You; *in an hour when ye think not* the summer shall be past, ***and the harvest ended***, and Your Souls Not Saved. . . . at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake ***concerning the ten virgins***. For they that are *wise* and Have Received the Truth, and *have taken* ***the Holy Spirit for their guide***, and ***have not been deceived*** — verily I say unto you, They Shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day. (D&C 45: <7 March 1831> 1, 2, 56–57; see also D&C 63: <Aug 1831> 53–54; *UPR* 79: <26 Jan 1880> 71)

The Pointed direction of this warning to the Saints cannot be denied. Again as it is expressed: "Heark-en, O ye people of my church, . . . hearken

unto my voice, Lest Death Shall Overtake You; *in an hour when ye think not* the summer shall be past, ***and the harvest ended***, and Your Souls Not Saved . . . . ." The essence of this same warning is again repeated in a Prophecy which was delivered to the Saints by President Heber C. Kimball in 1867, only one year before his death:

This Church has before it many close places, through which it will have to pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming . . . it will be necessary for you to have *a knowledge of the truth* of this work ***for yourselves***; the difficulties will be of such a character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. . . . . That is ***the word of God to you people***. Remember these sayings, for many of you will live to see them fulfilled. The time will come when *no Man nor woman* ***will be able to endure*** on Borrowed Light [i.e. Borrowed Oil]. Each will have to be guided ***by the light within himself***. If you do not have it, how can you stand? (*Conference Reports* <8 April, afternoon meeting, 1906> 76; see also, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* <1888 edition> 460–461)

In keeping with the warning as given in the New Testament by our Saviour, as also in Second Nephi, and again by the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Heber C. Kimball — in keeping with these, President Brigham Young also expressed the same concern. He worried that the Saints would place so much faith and confidence in their leaders, that they would neglect their own personal duty to obtain Divine Guidance through the Spirit of God. He feared that the Saints would rely wholly upon their leaders for their Salvation, thinking them to be infallible, and thus fall short of their Exaltation. Consider the following words of warning which President Young delivered to the Latter Day Saints:

What a pity it would be if we were led by one man to utter destruction! Are you afraid of this? I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders *that* ***they will not inquire for themselves*** *of God whether they are led by Him*. I am fearful they [will] settle down *in a state of* ***blind self security***, trusting their eternal destiny in the Hands of Their Leaders ***with a reckless confidence*** *that in itself would thwart the purposes of God* in their salvation, and weaken [the] influence they could give to their leaders, did they know for themselves, by the revelations of Jesus, that they are led in the right way. Let Every Man and Woman Know, *by the whispering of the Spirit of God* ***to themselves***, *whether their leaders are walking* ***in the path the Lord dictates***, or not. This has been my exhortation continually. (*JD* 9: <12 Jan 1862> 150)

In keeping with the sentiments of the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Young, the Scriptures prophesy of the last days:

For behold, at that day shall [Satan] . . . rage in the hearts of the children of men, and ***stir them up to anger*** Against That Which Is Good [i.e. the Principles of the Fulness of the Gospel].

And others will he Pacify, *and lull them away* ***into carnal security***, that they will say: *All is well in Zion;* ***yea, Zion prospereth***, All Is Well — and *thus the devil cheateth*

their souls, and *leadeth them away* ***carefully down to hell***. . . . . Therefore, Wo Be Unto Him That Is At Ease In Zion! ***Wo be unto him that crieth:*** All Is Well!

Yea, *wo be unto him* ***that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men,*** and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!

Yea, wo be unto him that saith: *We have received, and we need no more!* And in fine, *wo unto all those* Who Tremble, and Are Angry ***because of the truth of God!*** For behold, *he that is built upon the rock* ***receiveth it with gladness***; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.

Wo be unto him that shall say: ***We have received the word of God,*** and We Need No More of the Word of God, for ***we have enough!*** For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of *men line upon line,* ***precept upon precept,*** here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom*; for unto him that receiveth* ***I will give more;*** and *from them that shall say,* ***We have enough,*** From Them Shall Be Taken Away ***even that which they have***.

Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, ***or maketh flesh his arm,*** or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, *save their precepts shall be given* ***by the power of the Holy Ghost***.

Wo be unto the Gentiles (D&C 109: <27 March 1836> 60), saith the Lord God of Hosts! For notwithstanding I shall lengthen out mine arm unto them from day to day, ***they will deny me*** (2 Nephi 28:20–32)

The obvious context of this Prophecy is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Who else speaks of Zion — who else continues to affirm that *"All is well in Zion;* ***yea, Zion prospereth,*** All Is Well". It is the Latter-day Saints who continue to boast of their Financial Prosperity and the Respectable way in which they are received by the world. Indeed, not only is it preached every six months in Conference by the "Brethren", but their comfortable pleasure is sung about as well, by the world renowned Tabernacle Choir, "All is well — All is Well" (*Hymns, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* 13). Of course, when this song was originally written, "All Is Well" was only real in the context of their spiritual relationship with God. Their temporal reality was a trail that was literally dotted with the graves of their men, women and children. In the most literal sense, the Saints were in dire straits — nevertheless, all was well between them and God. But the church today sings this song with a new sense of revelry. They have beautiful churches and beautiful homes and nice clothing and "fine apparel", and the borders of Zion are expanding. They have good jobs and good pay — they are comfortable and can sit back and focus their minds week after week, month after month and year after year, upon light-minded entertainment and the things of the world — and oh how the world loves them! And just so, Nephi Prophesied of our day: "Therefore, Wo Be Unto Him That Is At Ease In Zion! ***Wo be unto him that crieth:*** All Is Well!" And why is this so? Obviously, because all is not well in zion, and because those that are "at ease in Zion" are being led "carefully down to hell." (2 Nephi 28:21)

Probably among all the Presidents of the Church, Heber J. Grant has been as responsible as any for bringing about the present conditions of things, and this is especially so in the final stages of the transition which occurred during his administration. Consider well the words which he spoke at the 78th Annual Conference of the church:

I feel to rejoice in the splendid condition of the Church at home and abroad. . . . . I had the privilege, a day or two ago, of attending a little meeting . . . . On that occasion, I read the hymn on page 168, it having first been sung by the choir . . . . [and] I decided to read it to the audience here today:

"Zion stands with hills surrounded.
Zion, kept by power divine;
All her foes shall be confounded,
Though the world its arms combine;
Happy Zion,
What a favored lot is thine! . . . . . .

This hymn reminds me of another, that I did not intend to read but I will:

"ZION PROSPERS, ALL IS WELL".

O awake! my slumb'ring minstrel,
Let my harp forget its spell;
Say, O Say, in sweetest accents,
ZION PROSPERS, ***all is well.***

"Strike a cord unknown to sadness,
Strike, and let its numbers tell,
In celestial tones of gladness,
ZION PROSPERS, ***all is well.***

"Zion's welfare is my portion,
And I feel my bosom swell
With a warm, divine emotion,
WHEN SHE PROSPERS, ***all is well.***

"Zion, lo! thy day is dawning,
Though the darksome shadows swell,
Faith and hope prelude the morning;
THOU ART PROSPERING, ***all is well.***

"Thy swift messengers are treading
Thy high courts where princes dwell,
And thy glorious light is spreading,
ZION PROSPERS, ***all is well.***"

In continuing his remarks, Grant sums up his feelings with the following words:

There is no question in my mind that Zion Prospers, ***and that all is well***. . . . I believe, as was said here this morning, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints **Was Never In A Better Condition** *than it is today,* ***spiritually,*** And Temporally, *and [in]* ***every way***. (Heber J. Grant — LDS Conference Reports 4th April 1908, afternoon session 26–28; see also "Oh Awake! My Slumbering Minstrel", *Hymns Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints,* 1978 edition, p. 268; see also other editions 1863–1984)

In view of the Prophecy that is given in 2nd Nephi 28, it is incredible that such a Song could find its way into the Official Hymn book of the Church — but then again, such is the nature of Prophecy! Just as with William Clayton's song, so also in the case of this, the words were originally written by Eliza R. Snow and published in her book *"Poems, Religious, Historical, and Political, Vol I (see page* 227). They were published in 1856 (see also the *Millennial Star* Vol 18 <24 May 1856> 336), which was just prior to the Utah War, and at a time when the Church was still very much engaged in a mortal struggle with the world and the Kingdom of Satan, to bring again Zion. In 1863, when in accordance with the Prophecy of the Prophet Joseph Smith (D&C 87: <25 Dec 1832> 1–8), the great enemy of the Saints (through betrayal of its own law) turned upon its own self, and locked arm in arm in mortal combat, the North against the South in the thralls of the Civil War. At this time for a short period, the Saints experienced a time of Jubilee and Peace, and hence President Young elected to have the words of Eliza's poem composed into a song which was added to the Hymn book (see *Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 12th edition Liverpool, 1863). In this context, the words of the song survived to a later time, when, after Compromise and Concession, the church and the world finally embraced one another as hail friends well met. At this point the song could be sung in view of ***a whole new idea,*** and A New Deal — indeed, temporally speaking, All Was Well in zion, and zion Did Indeed Prosper!

Consider yet another Proph-ecy from the Book of Mormon about the Latter Days, and the Latter-day Saints:

Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing. *And I know that ye do walk* ***in the pride of your hearts;*** and *there are none* ***save a few only*** *who do not lift themselves up* In The Pride Of Their Hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts. For behold, *ye do love money,* and ***your substance***, *and your fine apparel . . . .* ***O ye pollutions,*** Ye Hypocrites, ye teachers, ***who sell yourselves*** *for that which will canker,* ***why have ye polluted*** the Holy Church of God? . . . . Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies — ***because of the praise of the world?*** (Mormon 8:34–38)

Whenever was the Roman Catholic church, or any of her Protestant offspring ever equated in scripture as "the Holy Church of God". The church, which fits this description, as being the said "Holy Church of God" on Earth in the Latter Days, is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. There are, in fact, a number of prominent brethren and General Authorities in our own day and time who have acknowledged that this Prophecy is expressly written about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and not therefore about the Roman Catholics or any of her offspring. Among the General Authorities who have acknowledged this to be the case are the following: President Ezra Taft Benson of the First Presidency, Apostle L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve, H. Verlan Anderson of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and last but not least, Professor Hugh W. Nibley of BYU.*

— The Law of Obedience —

In view of the Prophetic picture which has been presented above, as well as many other events which have transpired in our day, what is to be expected of the Saints where it concerns their duty to the Priesthood and the Law of Obedience? In answer to this question, consider the following statement from a treatise on Priesthood. This statement was written by Apostle Samuel W. Richards and published in the ***Millennial Star***. Richards asks the question: "to what extent is obedience to those who hold the Priesthood required?" In answering his own query, he acknowledged that "This is a very important question, and one which should be understood by all Saints." In continuing he affirms that "**willing obedience to the laws of God**, ***administered by the Priesthood,*** is indispensable to Salvation", but then he adds that:

a proper conservative to this power exists ***for the benefit of all****, and* None Are Required ***to tamely and blindly submit*** *to a man* because he has . . . the Priesthood. We have heard men who hold the Priesthood remark, that they would do anything they were told to do by those who presided over them, [even] *if they knew* **It Was Wrong***:* But Such Obedience as this *is worse than folly* to us; it is **Slavery in the Extreme**; and the man who would thus *willingly* Degrade Himself*, should not claim a rank* Among Intelligent Beings, until he turns from his folly. . . . .

---

*For confirming statements by these brethren on this subject see: Ezra Taft Benson: ***A Witness and a Warning*** <April 1988 edition> 20; L. Tom Perry: ***Ensign*** <Nov 1992> 16; H. Verlan Andersen: ***The Great and Abominable Church of the Devil*** <copyright 1972> 182; Hugh W. Nibley: ***Since Cumorah*** < 3rd Printing 1973> 414–416, 426)

Others, *in the extreme exercise of their* **ALMIGHTY (!) AUTHORITY**, have taught that *such obedience was necessary,* and that **NO MATTER WHAT** THE SAINTS WERE TOLD TO DO *by their Presidents,* ***they should do it*** **WITHOUT ASKING ANY QUESTIONS**.

When the Elders of Israel will so far indulge in these extreme notions of OBEDIENCE, as to teach them to the people, it is generally because they have it in their hearts **TO DO WRONG** ***themselves,*** and wish to pave the way to accomplish that **WRONG** . . . . .

We would ask, "For what is the Priesthood given unto men?" It is that they may have a right to administer the law of God. *Have they then* **A RIGHT TO MAKE VOID THAT LAW?** VERILY NO. . . . .

If a man could have AS MUCH AUTHORITY AS THE ALMIGHTY, **IT WOULD NOT AUTHORIZE HIM TO DO WRONG**, *nor* [to] *counsel another to do wrong* . . . . . .

Great is the responsibility of that man who is called to give counsel which involves the salvation of another; and when such counsel is given, it should be of that pure character, that the powers above him . . . can approve. He will then have no occasion to . . .[tell] others that it will be no sin for them to [do wrong] if they are told to do it by the Priesthood, and thereby pervert the right ways of the Lord, and bring reproach upon the honour of His cause. *The Lord asks for* **NO SUCH CONFIDENCE IN HIS PRIESTHOOD** as this, neither do good men who are under its influence. THE PRIESTHOOD NEVER DEMANDS A WRONG at the hands of another, though men who hold the Priesthood may make such a demand, as has sometimes been the case, and for which they have had to suffer.

Where the authority of God is, there should the **CONFIDENCE** *of all men* be reposed, sufficiently to obey its laws, **BUT NOT TO VIOLATE THEM**; *for we have not yet learned* that it has power enough to SAVE the TRANSGRESSOR IN HIS SINS. Some men have been so wise as to think the little authority they had was sufficient for them *to set aside* **LAW** and **REVELATION** . . . . But in the end they have found that responsibility to be greater than they could bear. . . . . .

Some have supposed that the more authority men have in the kingdom of God, **THE GREATER IS THEIR LIBERTY** TO DISREGARD HIS LAWS, and that their **GREATNESS** consists in their almost **UNLIMITED PRIVILEGES**, which leave them ***without restrictions;*** but this is a mistaken idea. *Those who are the greatest in authority,* **ARE UNDER THE GREATEST RESTRICTIONS**; the law of their sphere is greater than that of those who are less in power, and THE RESTRICTIONS AND PENALTY OF THAT LAW ARE PROPORTIONABLY GREAT[ER]; therefore they are under the **GREATER OBLIGATION** to maintain the ***Virtue*** of the ***Law*** and the INSTITUTIONS OF GOD . . . . ***(Millennial Star*** Vol 14: <13 Nov 1852> 593–596)

In view of this most emphatic statement, and the force of its message, consider yet "ANOTHER GOSPEL" (Gal 1:8) which found its way into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and began to be preached and promulgated from the highest ranks, during the administration of President Heber J. Grant.

What follows is taken from the 1960 Semi Annual Conference talk of President Marion G. Romney:

I remember years ago when I was a bishop I had President [Heber J.] Grant talk to our ward. After the meeting, I drove him home. . . . . When we got to his home I got out of the car and went up on the porch with him. Standing by me, he put his arm over

my shoulder and said: "My boy, you always *keep your eye on the President of the Church,* and if he ever tells you to do anything, and **It Is Wrong**, *and you do it,* **the Lord Will Bless You For It**." Then with a twinkle in his eye, he said, "But You Don't Need To Worry. The Lord will *never let his mouthpiece* Lead The People Astray. (***Conference Report*** <Saturday, 8 October 1960> 78)

The above statement is a ***Blatant Contradiction*** to the preceding Article from the ***Millennial Star***. Not only so, but it brings certain fundamental questions to mind, such as: "How is it possible that the **Unchangable God**, can *annul* His own **Eternal Law** and give us a **Blessing** for doing that which He has commanded us not to do, or that which is "Wrong"! According to Grant, it is Right to do "Wrong" when told to do so by someone High in Authority. And yet, in sharp contrast to this, the Scriptures teach that **God is no Respecter of Persons**. (Col 3:25; Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; 1 Pet 1:17; 1 Nephi 17:35; D&C 1:35; 38:16) Again, how is it that God can over look that which is "Wrong", and give us a "**Blessing**" for doing that which is ***"Wrong"***, simply because the person who told us to do it holds High Office in the Church. Indeed, consider the Law of God respecting *what is required of us* before He can give us a Blessing:

> There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated — And *when we obtain any blessing from God,* it is by **Obedience** *to that* **Law** *upon which* ***it is predicated***. (D&C 130:20–21)

Again the nagging question forces itself upon the mind, *how can God* Bless us *for* ***transgressing His Law*** and Doing That Which Is Contrary to His Law, or that which is "**Wrong**"!

Of course, what President Grant and President Romney are actually talking about is the "Law of Obedience". As the Doctrine has come to be succinctly expressed among Latter-day Saints: "Obedience is the First Law of Heaven". To be sure, this catchy little phrase does sound good. But in Truth it might be better argued that "Obedience is the First Law of Hell", for in Hell there is no agency. Consequently a discussion of "the Law of Obedience" independent of the Divine Context of ***"Truth*** and ***"Righteousness"*** is a ***Moot Point***. Not only so, but according to the teachings of Jesus, ***Obedience*** is not really ***The First Law Of Heaven***.

Remember the question that was put to Jesus by the Lawyer:

> Master, which is The Great Commandment In The Law? Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God** *with all thy heart*, and *with all thy soul*, and *with all thy mind*. This is the First and Great Commandment. And the Second is Like Unto It, ***Thou shalt Love Thy Neighbour As Thyself***. On These Two Commandments **Hang** *all the law and the prophets*. (Matt 22:36–40)

If we are to believe what Jesus teaches here, all other laws, including the Law of "Obedience", "Hang" on the two laws just quoted. In other words,

any other act, or supposed law, which does not fit within the parameter of the two Laws quoted above are Null and Void.

On yet another occasion Jesus said, "If Ye Love Me, **Keep My Commandments**." (John 14:15) So if the First and Greatest Law is to *"love the Lord our God* With All Our Heart*"* — and if in order to Love Him, we must "Keep His Commandments", as stated in the above passage, how can we keep the *First and Greatest Commandment*, by going Contrary to God's Law, or doing That Which Is "Wrong". In keeping with the teachings of President Grant, the Response to this question is that it sometimes becomes necessary to do that which is "Wrong" in order to be Obedient to some Man who has High Office in the Church! Nevertheless, as we have already seen, Obedience to God can not be equated with Obedience to Priesthood Leaders — **Unless** Priesthood leaders act in Concert with God, and give direction in accordance with the *Spirit of their Calling* — in which case their directive will be in Keeping with the **Mind** and **Will** of **God** and **His Law**. It is True that the Law of Obedience **was Highly Stressed** in the Early Days of the Church, yet as we have already seen, so also was the ***Doctrine of Balance*** — that where there is a question of ***Moral Right,*** or the will of God, first we must know for ourselves whether or not that which our Leaders require is Right and in accordance with the Mind and Will of God. Remember President Young's warning to the Saints:

> What a pity it would be if we were led by one man to utter destruction! Are you afraid of this? I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders *that* **they will not inquire for themselves** *of God whether they are led by Him*. I am fearful they [will] settle down *in a state of* **Blind Self Security**, trusting their *eternal destiny* in the Hands of Their Leaders with a **Reckless Confidence** that in itself would *thwart the purposes of God* in their salvation . . . . Let Every Man and Woman Know, *by the Whispering of the Spirit of God* **to themselves**, *whether their leaders are walking* in the **Path the Lord Dictates**, or not. This has been my exhortation continually. (*JD* 9: <12 Jan 1862> 150)

Such statements make one wonder if President Young did not foresee some Dark Omen in the Future of the Church. We have already seen that President Heber C. Kimball did. It is interesting that before his death, President Young gave instructions that his casket should be made large enough so that he could roll over in his grave. Again, consider the words which President Young spoke in his last sermon, only 10 days before his death:

> And with regard to the conduct of this people — *if an angel should come here* and speak his feelings as plainly as I do, I think he would say, "O, Latter-day Saints! why don't you see, why don't you open your eyes and behold the great work resting upon you and that you have entered into? *You are blind,* You Are Stupid, **You Are In The Dark**, in the mist and fog, wandering to and fro like the boat upon the water without sail, rudder or

oar; [i.e. in other words by and large, you are without the Spirit of God] and you know not whither you are going." (***Journal of Discourses*** Vol 19: <19 Aug 1877> 93–94)

In view of President Young's warning, let us again review what is being taught to the Church in our day. Like a bad penny which continues to turn up, the same doctrine which was taught by Romney, was again repeated only six months later, when Apostle Harold B. Lee spoke of it at BYU, on the 19th of April 1961:

One thing that I would like you to get out of this is what President Grant used to say to us **Time and Again**: "Brethren, keep your eye on the President of this Church. *If he tells you to do anything* **And It Is Wrong** *and you do it,* the Lord Will Bless You For It. But *you don't need to worry*; the Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead this people astray." (Address Given to the Brigham Young University Student Body <19 April 1961> 9)

This same statement was published again eleven years later, in the ***Ensign*** Magazine (***Ensign*** <October 1972> 7). It will be noticed that in both the Romney statement, as well as in that of Harold B. Lee, President Grant instructed them saying that, "you don't need to worry, the Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead this people astray". The doctrine that "the Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead this people astray" is a doctrine that began to be taught by Wilford Woodruff after signing the "Manifesto". In fact one such statement has been canonized and added to the 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Consider the following:

The Lord will Never Permit me or Any Other Man ***who stands as President of this Church*** to **Lead You Astray**. ***It is not in the programme.*** It is not in the mind of God. *If I were to attempt that,* ***the Lord would remove me out of my place,*** and so He will *any other men* who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God *and from their duty*. (Doctrine and Covenants — Declaration 1; see also Sixty-first Semiannual General Conference of the Church, Monday, October 6, 1890, Salt Lake City, Utah, Reported in ***Deseret Evening News,*** October 11, 1890, p. 2)

Woodruff said this in order to ***assure*** the members of the Church that **Signing the Manifesto** did not Constitute an act of ***Apostasy***, for "the Lord" said Woodruff, ***"would take his life"*** before He would allow him to **Lead the People Astray**. What Woodruff means to convey by this, is just what President Grant Stated, that the people don't need to worry.

In keeping with the sentiment that "you don't need to worry" as stated by Romney and Lee — when "you don't need to worry", you don't need to ***"think"*** or be ***"concerned"***. Or expressed in other more brazen terms, *it becomes* ***unnecessary*** for the Saints to "**do their own thinking**" when there are others among the *"Brethren"* who are far better qualified to do it for them. And just so, this doctrine also began to be taught and promulgated during Grant's administration. Consider the following counsel which was sent out from Church Headquarters, only two weeks after Grant died:

[Satan] wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to speak against their leaders and to "DO THEIR OWN THINKING." . . . . . *When our leaders speak,* **THE THINKING HAS BEEN DONE**. When they propose a plan — *it is God's plan*. When they point the way, there is no other which is safe. WHEN THEY GIVE DIRECTION, it should mark *the end of controversy*. **GOD WORKS IN NO OTHER WAY**. To think otherwise, without immediate repentance, may cost one his faith, may destroy his testimony, and leave him a stranger to the Kingdom of God. (***Ward Teachers Message** for June, 1945*, "Sustaining the General Authorities of the Church", Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah)

The above statement was published and sent out to the Church only two weeks after Grant's death. It is therefore, not at all unlikely, that it was prepared for publication before he died, and that it was written in view of his teachings. It was sent out as the Message from the Leaders of the Church, which the **HOME TEACHERS** were to deliver to the families that they were appointed to Visit and Teach. Not only so, but it was published by the Church in two different publications during the month of June 1945 — first as a single sheet of paper which was given as a hand out to church members, by the ***Ward Teachers** for the month of June, 1945"*, and then again in the same month, in the June 1945 issue of the Church organ: *"**The Improvement Era*** (Vol 48: <June 1945> 354). This article directly affirms that "When our Leaders Speak, the thinking has been done" and that it is not thereafter necessary for the common members of the church to "do their own thinking". But how can a man or woman *know God,* or even the simple things of **RIGHT** and **WRONG** if they don't *"**Do their own thinking?**"* (Heb 5:11–14) Indeed, knowing right from wrong requires that you learn how to "**QUESTION**", and learning how to ask questions is fundamental to doing your own thinking. Once again how does Grant's doctrine fall in line with what the Prophet Joseph Smith taught respecting "Teaching the Saints Correct Principles to Live by" and then expecting them to "Govern themselves".

Consider the following statement by Apostle John Taylor:

We would here remark, that the Love and Fear of God is the Foundation of All Our Actions, Spiritual or Temporal — that this Work was commenced, and the organization of this Church was given, by Revelation, and by that it has been sustained to the present time.

Concerning government: Some years ago, in Nauvoo, a gentleman in my hearing, a member of the Legislature, asked Joseph Smith how it was that he was enabled to govern so many people, and to preserve such perfect order; remarking at the same time that it was impossible for them to do it anywhere else. Mr. Smith remarked that it was very easy to do that. "How?" responded the gentleman; "to us it is very difficult." Mr. Smith replied, "I TEACH THEM CORRECT PRINCIPLES [TO LIVE BY] AND THEY **GOVERN THEMSELVES**."*

*The statement cited above is taken from an article written by Apostle John Taylor, on "The Organization of the Church" — see *The Millennial Star* Vol 13: <15 Nov 1851> 339. For other references to this Statement and Doctrine, see: *JD* 10: <John Taylor 18 May 1862> 57; *JD* 12: <Geo A. Smith–2 June 1867> 26; *JD* 13: <Geo A. Smith–6 April 1869> 20; *JD* 24: <Erastus

When we contrast the above statement from the Prophet with that quoted in the *Improvement Era* and *Ensign* we are confronted with the question as to how a man can "govern himself" if he doesn't "do **HIS OWN THINKING**"? Again, the 2nd Article of Faith states that we will be "punished for our own sins and not for Adam's transgression." (Pearl of Great Price <1981 ed.> pp 60, Article 2) — but how can we be responsible for our own actions if we do not "Do our own thinking"? When the above statement was first published by the Church it created considerable stir among the people. One of those who responded to the Message was Reverend J. Raymond Cope of the First Unitarian Society in Salt Lake City, who addressed a letter to President George Albert Smith. Among other things he stated the following:

Last June there was delivered to my door a short religious editorial, prepared by one of your leaders, entitled "Sustaining the General Authorities of the Church." Its message amazed me a great deal, and with the passing of weeks my distur[b]ance became very acute. It might have passed, except that several members of your Church have come to me to discuss the subject. The most recent was a prominent doctor, who, because of this tract, he affirms, is losting [sic] his religious faith. He is a large man, and I became impressed with his deep sincerity as he broke down and wept like a boy. I am convinced that he is undergoing a very dangerous experience.

Permit me to quote the passages which seem to be brought most in question:

"He (Lucifer) wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to speak against their leaders and to 'do their own thinking[.]' "

"When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan — it is God's plan. When they point the way, there is no other which is safe. When they give direction, it should mark the end of controversy. . . ."

I do not know who is responsible for this statement, but I am sure it is doing inestimable harm to many who have no other reason to question the integrity of the Church leaders. Many people are suffering because of this. My reply to each of those who have spoken to me is "please do not become disturbed [sic], for this cannot be the position of the true leaders. And, from my knowledge of the early writings of your leaders, I must assume this to be non-representitive [sic].

Several years ago, when I first became acquainted with the L.D.S. Church, I read extensively in the texts, and there are many passages which may be used to give a better expression to the vision and genius of your Faith. I cite but one, although there are many others which are familiar to you.

Quoting from the *Discourses of Brigham Young*, as Selected and Arranged by John A. Widtsoe, in the Chapter on "The Priesthood":

Snow–24 June 1883> 159; *JD* 26: <Franklin D. Richards–30 Aug 1885> 297; *Doctrine of the Priesthood* Vol 7: <Benjamin F. Johnson–Apr–Oct 1903> 25; *JD* 10: <Brigham Young–31 May 1863> 190; *JD* 14: <Brigham Young–4 June 1871> 162; *JD* 13: <Brigham Young–25 Sept 1870> 244; L. John Nuttall Journal <Erastus Snow–11 Aug 1881>; *TPJS* <Joseph Smith–22 Jan 1834> 49)

"I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders that they will not inquire for themselves of God whether they are led by him. I am fearful that they [will] settle down in a state of blind self-security, trusting their eternal destiny in the hands of their leaders with a reckless confidence that in itself would thwa[r]t the purposes of God in their salvation, and weaken that influence they could give their leaders did they know for themselves, by the revelations of Jesus, that they are led in the right way. Let every man and woman know, by the whisperings of the Spirit of God to themselves, whether their leaders are walking in the path the Lord dictates, or not."

This quotation from Brigham Young is a wonderful passage, and it has been on the basis of such freedom that persons like myself have grown to have a deep feeling of kinship with the L.D.S. Church. It is in keeping with the high traditions of my Unitarian background that the gains made by my fellow workers are seen as gains for us all. It is a source of regret to all of us when one stone is discovered to bar the way to deeper faith within any soul.

With an assurance of my continued good-will and friendliness,

Most cordially yours,
J. Raymond Cope. [typed]

President George Albert Smith responded to Cope's letter as follows:

Church of Jesus Christ
of
Latter Day Saints

Office of the First Presidency
Salt Lake City, Utah
December 7, 1945

Dr. J. Raymond Cope
First Unitarian Society
13th East at 6th South Street
Salt Lake City, Utah

My dear Dr. Cope:

I have read with interest and deep concern your letter of November 16, 1945, in which you make special comment on "a short religious editorial prepared by one of your (our) leaders entitled "Sustaining the General Authorities of the Church". You say that you read the message with amazement, and that you have since been disturbed because of its effect upon members of the Church.

I am gratified with the spirit of friendliness that pervades your letter, and thank you for having taken the time to write to me.

The leaflet to which you refer, and from which you quote in your letter, was not "prepared" by "one of our leaders." However, one or more of them inadvertently permitted the paragraph to pass uncensored. By their so doing, not a few members of the Church have been upset in their feelings, and General Authorities have been embarrassed.

I am pleased to assure you that you are right in your attitude that **the passage quoted does not express the True Position of the Church.** *Even to imply* that members of the

Church **are not to do their own thinking** is grossly to misrepresent the true *ideal* of the Church, which is that every individual must obtain for himself a testimony of the truth of the Gospel, must, through the redemption of Jesus Christ, work out his own salvation, and is personally responsible to His Maker for his individual acts. The Lord Himself does not attempt coercion in His desire and effort to give peace and salvation to His children. He gives the principles of life and true progress, but leaves every person free to choose or to reject His teachings. This plan the Authorities of the Church try to follow.

The Prophet Joseph Smith once said: "I want the liberty of thinking and believing as I please." [*History of the Church* 5: <8 April 1843> 340] This liberty he and his successors in the leadership of the Church have granted to every other member thereof.

On one occasion in answer to the question by a prominent visitor how he governed his people, the Prophet answered: "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves."

Again, as recorded in the ***History of the Church*** (Volume 5, page 498 [i.e. 499] Joseph Smith said further: "If I esteem mankind to be in error, shall I bear them down? No. I will lift them up, and in their own way too, if I cannot persuade them my way is better; and I will not seek to compel any man to believe as I do, only by the force of reasoning, for truth will cut its own way."

I cite these few quotations, from many that might be given, merely to confirm your good and true opinion that the Church gives to every man his free agency, and admonishes him always to use the reason and good judgment with which God has blessed him.

In the advocacy of this principle leaders of the Church not only join congregations in singing but quote frequently the following:

Know this, that every soul is free
To choose his life and what he'll be,
For this eternal truth is given
That God will force no man to heaven.

Again I thank you for your manifest friendliness and for your expressed willingness to cooperate in every way to establish good will and harmony among the people with whom we are jointly laboring to bring brotherhood and tolerance.

Faithfully yours,
Geo. Albert Smith*

It will be noticed that in his response to Cope's letter, President Smith endeavored to ***disassociate*** the church and its Leaders from the substance of the ***Ward Teachers Message***. Yet this notwithstanding, it must be remembered that this "Message" was published by the Church on two different occasions in

---

*The Cope and Smith letters are in Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah — the J. Raymond Cope Collection (Association no. 691) and the George A. Smith Papers (Manuscript no. 36, Box 63–8A), respectively; *Dialogue*, Vol.19: <Spring 1986> 37–39)

the same month, one of which was in the ***Improvement Era***. Not only so but regardless of what President Smith wrote in his *private letter*, still the Church made no Public Retraction of the Statement or the Doctrine which it contained. The implication of this, is that the "Message" as originally sent out by the Church, was indeed issued by the Church for a reason — and the reason it was not retracted was because the leaders of the Church fully intended that the statement should have its desired affect upon the members of the Church. That this is so is manifest by the Church's continued emphasis on "**Unquestioned Obedience**" to its leaders, as stressed in the years that followed — a blatant example of which is to be found in the two afore quoted statements by Marion G. Romney and Harold B. Lee. If we are to acknowledge the ***Ward Teachers Message*** for all that it frankly states, while at the same time we accept President Smith's Private letter as a sincere statement, and this too, not only for what it does say, but also for what it does not say; Then we must believe that it was the hope of the "Brethren" that the members of the Church would, of their own free will, chose to "**Stand down**" or "**Abdicate**" their own ***position***, whenever their *personal* ***beliefs*** or ***convictions*** came in contact with the directive of Church Leaders.

As we have seen, teaching such a Doctrine to adults can be difficult, and for this reason in the future the brethren would find a more palatable way to express their thoughts. Indeed, as they finally came to realize, it is far easier to teach such ideas to Children than to Adults. This is after all what the Scriptures teach:

> Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

Again, as the above passage succinctly states, the things which you teach children will stay with them when they become mature adults. This then is how you teach adults to render **Unquestioned Obedience To Their Leaders** — by teaching them to be obedient when they are children. Bearing this in mind consider the following song which was added to ***The children's Song Book.*** This book was copyrighted by the Church in 1989, and is published for the use of the Junior Sunday Schools of the Church. As might be guessed, the name of this song is *"Follow the Prophet"*:

Follow the Prophet

1 Adam was a prophet, the first one we know. In the Garden of Eden he helped things to grow. Adam served the Lord by following his ways. We are his descendants in these latter days.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; and you won't go astray. Just follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; because the Prophet knows the way.

2 Enoch was a Prophet, he taught what was good. People in his city did just what they should. When they got righteous and did away with sin, Heavenly Father took them and they went to live with Him.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

3 Noah was a Prophet, he was called to Preach the word, he tried to cry repentance, but nobody heard. They were busy sinning — so Noah preached in vain. But they wished they had listened once they saw the rain.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

4 Abraham the Prophet who prayed to have a son, and the Lord sent Isaac to be the chosen one. Isaac begat Jacob, known as Israel; Jacob had Twelve sons, just like the Bible tells.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

5 Moses was a prophet sent to Israel. He led them to the Promised land to dwell. They were slow to follow, or so it would appear. For they Wandered in the wilderness for all of forty years.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

6 Samuel was a Prophet chosen as a boy. Hannah promised God her son would serve with joy. In the tabernacle Samuel heard his name; he was called by God and answered Here I am!"

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

7 Jonah was a Prophet who tried to run away, but he later learned to listen and even to obey. When we really try, the Lord won't let us fail; that is what Jonah learned deep down inside the whale.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

8 Daniel was a prophet. He refused to sin; so the king threw Daniel in the lion's den. Angels calmed the lions, and the king saw Daniels power was great for he obeyed Gods law.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

9 Now we have a world where people are confused. If you don't believe it go and watch the news. We can get direction all along the way, if we heed the prophets and follow what they say.

Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; don't go astray. Follow the prophet, follow the prophet, Follow the prophet; he knows the way.

It goes without saying that a song such as this would have a big influence on the mind of a *Small Child*. It is nothing less than a **Brainwash**. All together, counting the title, in one singing of the song, there are seventy five affirmations that we should follow the President of the Church. Again it is important for

us to realize, that even though the name of Adam is mentioned, this song does not really say that we should follow Adam. Nor for that matter does it suggest the idea that we should follow the Prophets Enoch, Noah, Abraham, or Moses — for these Prophets are all dead. Nor does it suggest the idea that we should follow Samuel, Jonah or Daniel, for they are also dead.

In keeping with this, it is also significant, that the song does not even so much as mention Jesus, nor his Death and Atonement, or the fact that he is the ***Resurrection and the Life,*** and that we should follow him. The reason for this is obvious, because he also died, and although he was ***resurrected,*** still he does not currently live with us here on Earth.

The song does mention the Seventh Dispensation, but this notwithstanding, there is no mention made of the Restoration of the Gospel, the Prophet Joseph Smith, President Brigham Young or President John Taylor, much less that we should follow them or their teachings. Again, the reason for this is also obvious, because they too are dead, and because they all taught Doctrine which the church no longer teaches and no longer practices. Consequently the song passes on without mentioning either the Restored Gospel or the founding Prophets, but rather alludes to "the confusion in the world today and all the bad news" — and then finally it affirms that "we can get direction all along the way, if we heed the [living] Prophets and follow what they say".

However simplistic this matter may be to the mind off a *small child,* yet thinking adults understand that things are not quite so simple. As we have already learned, with all the complexities of life in Mortality, just following the Prophet is not Good enough! Indeed as the Saviour has taught us, if we do not have ***"Oil in our Lamps",*** at the great and last day we will not be allowed to go into the Wedding! (D&C 45:56–59; Matt 25:1–13) Not only so, but as we have already seen, the Scriptures are replete with warnings against "Trusting in the Arm of Flesh" (2 Nephi 28:26, 31) — and this too, even if they are "Prophets" (Isa 28:7).

When you bring all this home, and combine all its pieces into a concerted whole, it becomes a Grand-Slam *Circular Argument* for **Unquestioned Confidence** and **Obedience** to the leaders of the church — and this too, even if their directive is ***"Wrong"***. "You can get direction all along the way" — just "Follow the President of the Church and you won't be led astray":

> Now we have a world where people are confused. If you don't believe it go and watch the news. We can get direction all along the way, if we heed the brethren and follow what they say.
>
> Follow the Brethren, follow the Brethren, Follow the Brethren; don't go astray. Follow the Brethren, follow the Brethren, Follow the Brethren; they know the way!

As of today this doctrine has become so pervasive, that many devout members of the church, in expressing their consternation, have begun to say that the church is full of "Lemmings"!

It is self-evident from the church's repeated publication of the statements made by Presidents Romney and Lee, to say nothing of the repeated publication of the ***"Ward Teachers Message",*** and the repeated publication and regular singing of the Primary Children's song — it is self-evident from all of these, that the leaders of the church have decided to Establish and Implement Grant's Doctrine as a Fundamental precept of the church.

Let us review our sources once again and see just where all this leads. As Grant emphasized the doctrine:

> Brethren, keep your eye on the President of this Church. *If he tells you to do anything* **And It Is Wrong** *and you do it,* the Lord Will Bless You For It.

In the above statement Grant, admonishes the Saints to "keep your eye on the President of the Church". However in contrast to this, the ***Home Teachers Message,*** which was published only two weeks after Grant's death, lays *an even broader foundation* — for therein, not only is the doctrine of **Unquestioned Obedience** applied to the President of the Church, but to other General Authorities as well. Indeed, in the ***"Ward Teachers Message"***, it is brazenly stated that:

> [Satan] wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to . . . "do their own thinking." . . . . . *When our* **Leaders** *speak,* **The Thinking Has Been Done**. When **They** propose a plan — *it is God's plan*. When **They** point the way, there is no other which is safe. When **They** Give Direction, it should mark *the end of controversy*. **God Works In No Other Way**. To think otherwise, *without* **Immediate Repentance**, may *cost one his faith,* may ***destroy his testimony,*** and leave him **a Stranger to the Kingdom of God**.

You will notice the word "**They**" as it is repeatedly used in the above statement as a reference to the "General Authorities". As constructed above then, not only is the idea of **Unquestioned Obedience** to be applied to the direction given by the President of the Church, but to other General Authorities as well — and not only to General Authorities, but ultimately even to Bishops and Stake Presidents. That this is so is an unavoidable conclusion, because **Direction and Government** in the Priesthood follows down, from the Higher to the Lesser, just as it does in a Military Government.

Again, be it Remembered, the Saints are persuaded that even if they are told by their "leaders" to do something which is "Wrong", if they will "follow council", and do what they are told, "God will bless them for it". In keeping with this, at times this doctrine has been used to persuade members of the Church to believe, that if there should ever be a question regarding the ***Moral Right*** or ***Wrong*** of anything that is required by the brethren — that they are to "**Surren-**

der" or "**Abdicate their Own Moral Compass**", and follow the direction of their leaders! In substance then, when a member of the church is acting ***under the direction*** of **church leaders,** the Doctrine of **Unquestioned Obedience** leads to **Spiritual Decapitation,** and the **Abdication** of **Personal Responsibility** for the commission of **Immoral Acts** and *"**Wrong Doing**"*. That this is so is established by the fact that *at times* members of the church have been told, that if wrong doing is required by church leaders, the responsibility for the wrong will be placed upon the leader who required it, and not upon the individual who committed the act. It cannot be denied that there is **Truth** in this idea. Indeed church leaders will be held responsible before God for ***Wrong Doing*** which they require of members of the church! However it is **Equally True** that if a member of the church is *"**Of Age**"* and can be adjudged to be *"**Mentally Competent**"*, that he will also be held responsible before God for those things which he does — and this too regardless of the "Priesthood Rank" of that person who gives him direction! Indeed, even at law, when a person becomes of age to know ***Right*** from ***Wrong,*** he becomes Legally Responsible for his own acts. How much more then should this be *true* for "Citizens" in the "Kingdom of God". Indeed, by the law of God an individual must be old enough to know right from wrong before he can be Baptised, and hence the minimum age limit for Baptism, which was set by God to be at the age of 8 years.

Let us now consider some of the **Consequences** which have come as a result of this doctrine, at times when **Obedient** members of the Church were "**Misled" by** their "**Less than Perfect Leaders**". The **Truth** be told, the Ugliest **Episodes** in Church History can be explained by this doctrine, and among these is the "Massacre at Mountain Meadows"**.** In the past Latter-day Saints have been utterly appalled by this event, and in an effort to separate themselves from it, many have lived in Total Denial. Yet all this notwithstanding, the facts speak for themselves — the Masacure at Mountain Meadows did occur — and not only did it occur, but it took place under the direction of Ward and Stake leaders.

It is not my intention to harrow up the minds of my readers with morbid descriptions of this event, but only to make the Fundamental Point of the grave danger that the Doctrine of **Unquestioned Obedience** poses for the Church and its members, and then we will pass on. In the case of the Massacre at Mountain Meadows, it took place at the behest of Isaac Haight, who was doubling up as the Stake President at Ceder City and the Commanding Military Officer of the local Militia — Haight, together with the willing assistance of John D. Lee (who was a prominent member of the Church, and whom Haight had stirred up and called into action) made it happen.

To begin with it must be remembered that the Massacre took place under the extenuating circumstances of the Utah War. Yet this notwithstanding, it

is nonetheless true that helpless men and women who had surrendered under a flag of truce — and even innocent children, some of whom were below the age of eight, were put to death under the direction of the Stake President at Cedar City. In order to do away with the witnesses, and thereby *"cover their sins"* (D&C 121:37), the order was given that all those who were old enough to remember had to be put do death, and this included some small children, some of whom were below the age of 8 — in other words "Innocent Blood"! As the Doctrine and Covenants expresses it:

> The "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant [i.e. Baptism] (D&C 22:1; 101:39), saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law can in nowise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord. (D&C 132:27)

After giving up their arms and surrendering under a flag of Truce, nearly 120 defenseless men, women and children were fired upon and shot to death. When it became known, President Young summmoned John D. Lee to Salt Lake City, to answer for what he had done. In making his defense, Lee assured President Young that "not a drop of innocent blood was shed." In utter exasperation President Young Retorted: "Even the women and children John! I don't want to hear another word of it!"*

---

*I first heard this statement from Dr. Don Moorman, who was a professor of History at Weber State College.

As he would say, it is true that my name is "Moorman, but I am not a "Mormon". I met Dr. Moorman at someones home one day in the early 70s when out checking leads south of the College and below the hill in South Ogden. Evidently an acquaintance of his had come into Sears to look at a Vacume or Sewing Machine, and I had written down her name as a lead for a future sale. However, when I knocked, it was Dr. Moorman that opened the door. I did not then know who he was, but 2 or 3 days later I ran onto him again in the History Department at Weber State College, when I learned that he was a Professor of History, and that his special interest was "Brigham Young". It was at that point that I realized I had met someone special and with whom I had a great deal in common.

One day a week Dr. Moormon would go to the Church Archives in Salt Lake City and spend 8 hours typing out documents which had to do with the life of President Young. As of the time that I met him, he had been doing this for 10 years. He considered himself to be the Churches "Token Gentile", because they allowed him acess to the Brigham Young papers, which in those days was very unusual, especially for a Gentile.

There were records at the Church Archives, to which I had been denied acess, and some of these I had tried to get copies of for years, and after meeting Professor Moorman, he gave me some assistance.

For example there was a speech given by President Young on the 19th of February 1854, which had never been published. I knew what was in this speech, because Wilford Woodruff had recorded part of it in his journal. From Woodruff's account I knew that this speech contained one of the most significant statements on Adam-God that President Young ever made. Later I learned that George D. Watt had recorded the whole speech, and that it was in the Brigham Young papers

Since the very beginning the Church had been maligned by the Press — and now in an effort to protect the Church against bad press, President Young endeavored to silence all talk and suppress the flow of information regarding the ugly deed. However in spite of his effort, as time would ultimately prove, this was not to be, for in later years the federal government would endeavor to convict President Young of the massacre, and with it the whole Church.

It is worthy of note, that it is possible that President Young succeeded in frustrating the governments effort to malign the Church by Sacrificing his own life. This he may have done by suffering himself to have small doses of Arsenic administered to him, until he finally died — and by this means put an end to the Governments effort to prosecute him and bring the Church into disrepute. Years ago Samuel W. Taylor gave a Pathologist the "attending physician's report" of President Young's gradual demise and death. After having studied it, the conclusion which was arrived at, was that President Young had been given small doses of Arsenic in his coffee, and that he had been given this on a regular basis, until he finally died.

A solid argument that President Young would never have ordered the Massacre at Mountain Meadows, is demonstrated by the things that he did,

---

However George D. Watt had a descendant named Ron Watt who worked in the archives, and inasmuch as I had told him what was in this speech, on his own hook he decided that I should not have it, and so he put a note on the file that it was not to be checked out to me, and after several years of this, finally Professor Moormon made a typescript of it for me, and years after this I finally obtained a photo-copy of the original manuscript.

Initially Professor Moorman's interest and intent with regard to President Young was to expose him for all the wicked things which he had done. Such things, for example as the Mountain Meadows Massacure, and different killings which President Young had been accused of. However, as it turned out, the more Moormon reasearched the life of President Young, the better he got to know him. And as he got to know him, he began to admire and respect him. In the end, as Doctor Moormon told me, he felt that he knew President Young better than he did his own father. Not only so, but he also told me that through his research he had cleared President Young of 2 different killings, and not only did he clear him, but he also proved who it was that did them and for what motive.

One of the interesting things which Moormon told me, was that when he first came into the Church archives in the 1960s, there was a file on the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and that the statement which I cited above was in it. However, as he then told me, after having seen and read in this file, one day the whole of it disappeared, as though it had never been. Moormon supposed that this file had been culled together, by gathering documents from other collections, and that at a later time someone decided to disassemble the file, and to refile the documents back into the collections from which the documents had originally been taken.

This is one possibility, however another is that the whole file disappeared into Joseph Fielding Smith's roll around safe, of which Michael Quinn has spoken.

In any case, Moorman felt that in view of the above statement, together with others which he had found, that of all the participants, John D. Lee was the most responsible, and hence if someone must die for what took place, Lee was the person who aught to die.

both as Governor of Utah and President of the Church. Consider for example what he chose to do in another similar situation at Nauvoo, when circumstances were far worse than they were in Utah with the family wagon train that was passing through Cedar City.

After the murder of the Prophet Joseph Smith, a gang of mobsters with painted faces who numbered in the 100s, rallied together and began to raid the homes of Church members who lived on the outskirts of Nauvoo. They would forcefully evict members of the Church from their homes, and then burn them to the ground — forcing the occupants to leave their property and flee to Nauvoo for shelter. These mobsters had succeeded in burning the homes of 200 families, but for some reason, only rarely did they fire upon the occupants. President Young sent an armed Posse out after them, with Bishop George Miller at their head. On one occasion the whole gang of mobsters and their camp was located by Miller and his Posse. George Miller wanted to make a surprise attack on the mob, and likely would have killed the whole lot of them — however before acting a currier was sent to President Young asking for approval. President Young had learned from experience in Missouri what happens when you fight back, consequently he sent a message and forbid the attack. Here we have a mob that had burned the homes of 200 different families, all of whom were members of the Church. Not only so but this same mob was continuing in their hostile crusade against the Church and its members — and yet even though President Young would have been justified, when he had the perfect opportunity, he refused to shed blood.

Again, let us consider the case of the Utah War. A Hostile Invasion, composed of an Army of 3000 soldiers was en route to Utah. They had been sent out under orders by the Federal Government of the United States to put down a supposed rebellion. President Young decided against allowing this armed force into the valley, and when he commisioned his officers, he gave them strict orders that they were not to fire upon the enemy, but rather that they were to attack and destroy their supply wagons. This was a dangerous task to accomplish, for the army was both hostile and heavily armed, and the fact that they were not to fire upon the enemy compounded the danger to those who were enlisted to oppose the invasion. In the end the United States Army was left stranded in the Wilderness, a 1000 miles from help, without food or supplies. This was true with the exception of the food and supplies that President Young was pleased to allow them to have. President Young saw to it that they did have the bare necessities which were necessary in order for them to survive the Winter. In the end the war was over, and this too without the shedding of blood.

Now if President Young was so bold as to Wage War against the army of the United States — while at one and the same time he gave orders forbiding his men from firing upon the enemy. If he was willing to go this far in an effort

to avoid bloodshed, why would he then turn around and order the senceless killing of helpless men, women and children, who had been disarmed under a flag of truce. President Young was not stupid. What could he possibly have thought to gain by such an ***insane*** act! In view of the choices which President Young made during his tenure as Governor and President of the Church, the idea that he would order the killing of helpless men, women and children is utterly absurd. Indeed not only is this accusation without foundation, but it is also out of character.

The Mountain Meadows Massacure was **InSane**, and those who made it happen were **InSane** — and People who are InSane Often Do InSane Things — and this too, even if they are Members of the Church. We need to remember that many of those who perpetrated the Massacre at Mountain Meadows had themselves been the victims of bitter persecution, and this too, not just once. Indeed, some of them had been driven from their homes, as many as 7 times. During their persecutions they had to watch while members of their own family and friends were forced out into the cold, where many of them would freeze, starve and die. Think for a moment how you would feel after being driven from your home just once — but think again — how much worse would you feel after having been driven 7 times. And now, after experiencing all this, here are these Gentiles, who in their drunken stuper have assalted citizens and defied local law officials, and all this too, right in the middle of the Utah War. Indeed, the United States Government had effectively declared War on Utah — Utah Territory was in the process of being invaded by an Armed force composed of thousands of soldiers, with the declared intent of administering to the Saints another dose of their "Justice"!

Inasmuch as Utah was in the midst of an invasion, President Young had issued orderes that no supplies be sold to outsiders — the reason being that they would likely be needed before the War was over. Yet this notwithstanding, the wagon train from Arkansas was in bad need of grain for their animals and other supplies. However as they passed from one town to another, the locals consistently refused to sell, and for this reason there were those among them who had developed a bad attitude. When the wagon train passed through Cedar City, they once again pressed for their needs, only to be refused again. This left some members of the wagon train in a state of anger, and through drunken misconduct during their stay in Cedar City, they defied local law officials and succeeded in encuring the wrath of some of the residents, among whom was Isaac Haight. Haight in turn aroused John D. Lee, and it was through this means that the powder keg was ignited that ultimately led to the Massacure at Mountain Meadows.

Even though it is true that Isaac Haight had ordered the Massacure, still by and large, as far as active participation was concerned, John D.

Lee was the most guilty — and notwithstanding President Young's effort to supress the flow of information regarding the whole affair, ultimately the federal government pressed for trial and finally Lee was given up, placed on trial and convicted, and then condemned to be shot to death.

By now Lee was in denial and turned apostate. He reminded President Young that he had always been an avid diarist and record keeper, and that there was not a little in what he had written that could be used to publish against the Church. In response to this, President Young arranged to have Lee executed while sitting on the edge of his coffin. To say the least, this is an unusual way to be shot by a firing squad. Is it possible that Lee was wearing a steal plate under his shirt, when he sat on the outer edge of his open casket, and asked the Firing Squad to aim true? When they fired Lee fell backwards into his coffin, supposedly dead — whereupon certain men came foreward, and without an examination of the body, they put the lid on the coffin and carried him away.

Reportedly three days after his execution, Lee was seen by the father of Price Johnson while crossing Lee's Ferry, enroute for Old Mexico. Price Johnson was a resident of Cainbeds, Utah, and his father worked at the crossing of Lee's Ferry. I was told this story in the early 1970s by Hal Bjorkman of Salt Lake City. As a follow up, in 1979, I went to visit Price Johnson for the purpose of an interview, and among other things, I asked him questions about the story related above. As he then told me, he did not recall having ever said such a thing. However as of that time Price Johnson was about 93 years old. In any case about 32 years later I learned that sometime after the supposed execution, Lee's Lawyer found himself in financially desperate times. Consequently he decided to publish Lee's Anti-Mormon book, and he let it out that in fact Lee was not executed. If anyone would know about any deals being made with President Young, to be sure it would have been Lee's Lawyer, as he would have been the man who made the deal with President Young. All this aside, I have been told that there is a picture of Lee's body, which shows that he was shot in the heart — and as I understand, in the not so distant past, records have surfaced which say that Lee's family saw his body after his execution. In any case, Lee's Gentile Lawyer let it out that Lee was not executed, and in the end Lee's anti-Mormon book was published — the question is "How much did he change in the text before he had it Printed".

It might be asked, what would have happened on the eventful day of September 11, 1857, had those who did the deed followed their own Conscience, rather than obeying orders from their Stake President, which they knew to be Morally ***"Wrong"***. Haight and John D. Lee could not possibly have carried out the plan by themselves — consequently the "Massacure at Mountain Meadows" never would have happened. What happened at Mountain Meadows occured during a War and bad things happen in war. Yet this notwithstanding, at the

time it occured, those who did it knew that it was wrong. In the end even Lee came to his senses — when finally he had to look into the faces of the dead and dieing. It was at this Gut Wrenching Moment when finally the veil of **Insanity** was lifted from off his mind and he saw the Truth of what he had done.

Think what would have happened, had those who did the deed stood up as valient men of God and honored their own Conscience, and refused to follow orders — with the resolute decision that it was better to die for insubordination, than to fire upon and kill helpless men, women and children!

In view of all this, it can honestly be said: So much for the Doctrine of President Grant!!!

> Brethren, keep your eye on the President of this Church. *If he tells you to do anything* **And It Is Wrong** *and you do it,* the Lord Will Bless You For It. But *you don't need to worry*; the Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead this people astray.

President Grant's affirmation be damned, all thinking Adults can rest Assured that those who participated in the Massacure at Mountain Meadows were not blessed by God for what they did on that day. Again, so much for the doctrine which "The Brethren" sent out to the members of the church two weeks after Grant's death:

> [Satan] wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to . . . "do their own thinking." . . . . . *When our* **LeaderS** *speak,* **The Thinking Has Been Done**. When **They** propose a plan — *it is God's plan*. When **They** point the way, there is no other which is safe. When **They** Give Direction, it should mark *the end of controversy*. **God Works In No Other Way**. To think otherwise, *without* **Immediate Repentance**, may *cost one his faith,* may ***destroy his testimony,*** and leave him **a Stranger to the Kingdom of God**.

Once again, we need to realize that even though the Massacure at Mountain Meadows was perpetrated under the direction of the local "Brethren" at Cedar City, yet even still it was not in accordance with the mind and will of God. Not only so, but those who committed the act have to share in the responsibility along with those who gave direction. This is True of those who participated in the Massacre at Mountain Meadows, just as it is also True of the Military Personal who participated in the Meli Massacre in Veitnam, together with the many, many, many other similar acts which have been perpetrated by the Unites States Military in other countries since then — and hence the common mental problems of Soldiers who come home. For they must live with the guilt of what they have done every day of their life, for the rest of their lives — and on the day that they die, most surely they will go to stand before God for Judgment — to be judged "By their Works":

> And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: *and the dead were judged out*

of those things which were written in the books, According To Their Works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: ***and they were judged*** every man **According To Their Works**.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And *whosoever was not found written in the book of life* **Was Cast Into The Lake Of Fire**. (Revelation 20:12–15)

If not before, most surely, on the day of Judgment, all men will learn that notwithstanding the responsibility of others who give bad direction — this will not relieve individuals of their own personal responsibility to know and "do what is right".

Indeed, rather than believing that adults can pass the responsibility of their actions on to their leaders, they ought to take a gander at the following warning which was given by the Prophet Joseph Smith to the Saints on a similar day:

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen? And why are they not chosen? Because . . . they do not learn this one lesson — **That the Rights of the Priesthood are Inseparably Connected with the Powers of Heaven**, and that *the powers of heaven Cannot Be Controlled Nor Handled* ***only upon the principles of righteousness.*** That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but *when we undertake to cover our sins,* or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to **Exercise Control or Dominion or Compulsion** upon the souls of the children of men, ***in any degree of unrighteousness,*** behold, **The Heavens Withdraw Themselves**; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; *and when it is withdrawn,* **Amen to the Priesthood or the Authority of that Man**. (D&C 121: <20 March 1839> 34–37)

You will notice that the above passage speaks of those who undertake to "cover their sins". Before the Massacre occured there were three men who separated from the main party of the wagon train. Lee endeavored to have these individuals killed, however one escapted and returned to the main body of the wagon train, at which time the others were informed that it was actually the whites who were trying to kill them. Consequently Lee and Haight decided that all those who were old enough to remember had to die, not only the men and women, but also the children. And by this means they endeavored to ***"cover their sins"***. So much then for the Priesthood Authority of Isaac Haight and John D. Lee.

At the time of the Massacre, the above passage of scripture was not yet Canonized as part of the Doctrine and Covenants. It would be a few years yet to come before President John Taylor would make the decision to have section 121 canonized, and this too for good reason — as there were men in the Church who had used their Priesthood to exercise "unjust dominion" and during the administration of President Taylor, these individuals were sought out and ***Excommunicated***. Once again let us remember another similar statement

which was made by the Prophet, and this too, due to other similar problems he was having within the Church:

President Joseph Smith read the 14th chapter of Ezekiel — Said the Lord had declared by the Prophet [Ezekiel], *that the people* Should Each One ***stand for himself,*** and *depend on no man or [set of] men* in that state of corruption of the Jewish church — *that* ***righteous persons could only deliver their own souls*** — *applied it to* the Present State of the ***Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*** — said if the people departed from the Lord, They Must Fall — *that they were depending on the Prophet*, ***hence were darkened in their minds***, *in consequence of* Neglecting the Duties ***devolving upon themselves*** (*TPJS* 237–238; *HC* 5: <26 May 1842> 19)

In the above statement the Prophet makes this whole issue clear. He quoted from the 14th chapter of Ezekiel, wherein he said that "the Lord had declared by the Prophet Ezekiel, that the People Should Each One Stand for Himself, and *depend on no man or [set of] men* ***in that state of corruption of the Jewish church****".* In continuing he quoted Ezekiel as saying that: "Righteous Persons Could Only Deliver Their Own Souls". But this is not all that the Prophet said, for in closing he applied . . . the same situation *"****to the Present State*** *of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints".* In so doing the Prophet affirmed that Latter Day Saints ought to "Stand for Themselves", and that they ***ought not to blindly*** "**Depend On Any Man or Set of Men** *in the* **Church**" to lead them. Finally the Prophet stated that "if the people departed from the Lord, **They Must Fall** — that they were ***depending on the Prophet,*** hence were **Darkened In Their Minds**, in consequence of **Neglecting the Duties** ***devolving upon themselves****".*

In substance then, what the Prophet is saying, is that the Saints need to be responsible for themselves — that they need to "**Do Their Own Thinking**" — and contrary to the *Home Teachers Message,* that they should not "Depend Upon Any Man or Set of Men" to do their thinking for them. The Prophet stated that the people "***were*** . . . Neglecting the Duties ***devolving upon themselves***". And what duties were they neglecting? They were Neglecting the **Duty** *and* **Personal Responsibility** *of* **Knowing Right** from **Wrong** and of **Thinking For ThemSelves**, and because of this they had ***fallen into sin.***

Let us now take another look at some of the statements which were made by President Young and consider well his warnings and teachings to us in our day, and how what he then said applies to us. Indeed, consider once again the following warning from President Young:

What a pity it would be **if we were led by one man to utter destruction**! Are you afraid of this? I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders *that* ***they will not inquire for themselves*** *of God whether they are led by Him*. I am fearful they [will] settle down *in a state of* ***blind self security***, trusting their eternal destiny in the Hands of Their Leaders ***with a reck-***

less confidence *that in itself would thwart the purposes of God* in their salvation . . . . Let Every Man and Woman Know, *by the whispering of the Spirit of God* ***to themselves***, *whether their leaders are walking* ***in the path the Lord dictates***, or not. This has been my exhortation continually. (*JD* 9: <12 Jan 1862> 150)

The Mountain Meadows Massacure occured in 1857, and the above statement was made 5 years later. Do we not see in this a warning which President Young is trying to give to the people. As he bluntly stated: "*What a pity it would be* **if We were Led by One Man to Utter Destruction**!" Where do you suppose those who followed Lee and Haight went! Again only a few months before the masacure President Young warned the people:

. . . in the midst of all that we hear from this stand with regard to counsel and **Implicit Obedience** to **Counsel**, you and I must have **the Testimony of Jesus** *within us,* or it is of *but little use* for us to ***pretend to be servants if God***. We must have **That Living Witness Within Us**. We need ***the light of the Holy Spirit*** **Continually**, *day by day,* as you have been told hundreds of times. **How Easy It Would Be for Your Leaders to Lead You to Destruction**, *unless you actually know* the ***mind and will of the Spirit yourselves***. That is your privilege. (*JD* 4: <28 June 1857> 368)

Again on still another occasion, 3 years after the massacre President Young said:

I wish to impress upon the minds of the Saints the importance of so living ***that they will always know*** the *voice of the Good Shepherd*. When they hear the voice of the *Spirit of inspiration* — the power of God, through any person, let the feelings and sensibilities of every one who professes to know anything of the things of God, *be in a state* ***to know and discern*** *between that which is of God* ***and that which is not***. I have exhorted the brethren, all the day long, in this way. My Whole Study is Employed *and my whole soul is drawn out* to induce this people *to live their religion*.

How often has it been taught that ***if you depend entirely*** upon the voice, judgment, and sagacity of those appointed to lead you, and neglect to enjoy the Spirit for yourselves, *how easily* ***you may be led into error,*** and Finally Be **Cast Off** *to the* ***left hand?*** (*JD* 8: <20 May 1860> 59)

The above statement, together with the many other statements which were made by President Young, would argue hard for the idea that he was deeply concerned that the Latter-Day Saints would be led astray by their leaders — and this too, not only in his day, as was the case at Mountain Meadows, but he was also concerned about the future after his passing. Indeed, that this was so was directly stated by Huge Nibley to his students. Consider the following:

Well its like Brigham Young says — "the damned pride and foolishness of the brethren will make sure that most people get kicked out of the Church." You see, you can't let the brethren affect you — you can't let them affect your testimony — that's the way I feel about it, because President Young did say that. In fact, Hugh Nibley

mentioned to us that his grandfather was told by Brigham Young himself, as they got through with a meeting with the Twelve — they were walking down the dusty main street — he just looks over to him and says, "Charles it's going to be the damned pride and foolishness of the brethren — most of the Saints are going to leave the Church because of that. It won't be because of the plagues, the pestilences, or the mobs — they'll leave because of the foolishness of the brethren" — you can't let the brethren affect you — I mean, I don't let them [affect me] — I let them do their thing, and I keep my testimony, because its on God — it's not affected by other men and whatever. (Russel Peak, as stated in a meeting 16 Feb 1987, "So You Want Celestial Glory, ***Doctrine of the Priesthood*** Vol 5: <March 1988> No.3

Once again, let us consider what Apostle Franklin D. Richards had to say with regard to Obedience and Cooperation with the Priesthood:

According to examples which are recorded in sacred writ, and which have actually been witnessed by many of the Saints of the present dispensation, men are called to receive the Priesthood, and in virtue of it, perform a certain work for which they seem adapted, *and afterwards they are suffered to* **Dishonor that Priesthood** by using the influence which they have gained, *to lead others astray;* and thereby **Dishonor** and **Reproach** have at times been brought upon those who considered it *a duty to listen to their counsel.* By being enabled thus to accomplish their . . . unlawful ends, they have brought disgrace and suffering upon others, ***incurred the wrath of God*** and the disapprobation of His people upon themselves, and *the power of the Priesthood* **has Altogether Departed** *from them,* for **its Virtue Will Not Abide With Those Who Violate Its Laws**.

Because of these facts, and the apparent imperfections of men on whom God confers authority, the question is sometimes asked, — to What Extent is Obedience to Those Who Hold the Priesthood Required? *This is a very important question,* and one which should be understood by all Saints. In attempting to answer this question we would repeat, in short, what we have already written, that ***willing obedience*** *to the* ***laws of God,*** *administered by the Priesthood,* is **Indispensable to Salvation** but we would further add, that a proper conservative to this power exists ***for the benefit of all,*** *and* None Are Required ***to tamely and blindly submit*** *to a man* because he has . . . the Priesthood. We have heard men who hold the Priesthood remark, that they would do anything they were told to do by those who presided over them, [even] *if they knew* **It Was Wrong***:* But Such Obedience as this *is worse than folly* to us; it is **Slavery in the Extreme**; and the man who would thus *willingly* Degrade Himself, *should not claim a rank* Among Intelligent Beings, until he turns from his folly. . . . .

Others, *in the extreme exercise of their* **Almighty (!) Authority,** have taught that *such obedience was necessary,* and that **No Matter What** the Saints were told to do *by their Presidents,* ***they should do it*** **Without Asking Any Questions**.

When the Elders of Israel will so far indulge in these extreme notions of Obedience, as to teach them to the people, it is generally because they have it in their hearts **To Do Wrong** ***themselves,*** and wish to pave the way to accomplish that **Wrong** . . . . .

We would ask, "For what is the Priesthood given unto men?" It is that they may have a right *to administer* **The Law Of God**. *Have they then* **a Right to Make Void that Law?** Verily **No**. . . . .

If a man could have as much Authority as the Almighty, **It Would Not Authorize him To Do Wrong**, *nor* [to] *counsel another to do wrong* . . . . . .

As we have seen, what Apostle Richards has written is in keeping with scripture — and not only with the teachings of scripture, but also with the teachings of the founding Prophets of this Dispensation. And this being so, the Truth of the following statement is Self-Evident:

With Regard to the Laws of the Land — We should be Subject to God and His Law, and His children should observe to do all things whatsoever He shall command them. (D&C 98:4)

In keeping with this, it is also True that a man's First and Primary Obligation *is forever* to his Own Conscience — To Thine Own Self be True. Of necessity, all Governments and all Godly endeavors at Union and Cooperation must hold sacred this **Fundamental Principle of Freedom** and **Free Agency**.

The above statement represents the **True** *and* **Unadulterated Doctrine** *of the* **Priesthood** — *it is the* **Doctrine** *of* **God**, *and the* **Doctrine** *of* **All True Prophets**, *and it is found written* **Everywhere in Scripture**. And while it is True that ***Salvation*** and ***Exaltation*** in the Kingdom of God *does require a certain* **Union** and **Cooperation** with the **Priesthood** — Yet it is also True that "**No Amount of Authority Gives a Man the Right To Do Wrong!!!** Not only so, but as far as the **Kingdom of God** and the *Law of* **Obedience to the Priesthood** is concerned, *a man's* ***First and Primary Obligation*** *must forever be* ***to his own*** **Conscience**. Indeed, *it was never intended by God* that the Union *of the* Saints *or the* Union *of the* Priesthood *should be* **Predicated Upon the Compromise of Principle**!

— A Warning —

Before concluding this introduction, a warning is appropriate. In the pages that follow there will be many ***Doctrinal Principles*** many of which you may

never have heard. Some of these have not been publicly taught and espoused by the church for over a hundred years. Some of them never were taught in simple plainness before the public and most of them never were accepted and voted upon as doctrine of the Church. The fact that these doctrinal Principles are not espoused and voted as doctrine by the church today does not prove that they are wrong, or that they are not of God, for the voice of the majority has never had power to sway the path of Truth. Truth is Truth regardless of who believes or disbelieves it — opinion does not change the Truth. President George Q. Cannon assures us of this in the following words:

"I have received a very interesting communication from a gentlemen in Michigan, in which he asks some questions, the answers to which, I think, may be of interest . . . He says: . . . . .

"'It is alleged by [certain] men . . . that when Joseph, the Seer, gave a revelation it must be tested in this way — that is, it must first be presented to the High Council or the Twelve Apostles, for their approval, and then pass on to the next quorum below for their approval, and so on down to the Deacons' quorums, and if it pass down to all the quorums of the Priesthood 'without meeting a snag,' it must then be taken as true. . . . It is astounding to me that when Joseph himself testified to anything as revelation from God, it could not be credited at once as from God, without going through such an ungainly formula. . . . It seems strange in the extreme that the anointed Prophet of God, who was the only authorized revelator to the Church, ordained and set apart to stand in the presence of God, and carry His word from His own mouth to mankind, the man who is of all others supposed to know that he is not deceived *cannot be sure that he is right* until he is tested in this way by men who are supposed to know the *least about such matters*. Surely such a process as the above cannot be true. Please, if you know anything about such a rule, tell me the particulars about it'."

The writer's reasoning upon this point seems quite conclusive, and it would be difficult to state it better than he has stated it. It seems nonsensical that the Prophet of God should submit to such a test as this, and not deem the revelations he received authentic until they had the approval of the different quorums of the Church. *They were authentic and divinely inspired,* whether any man or body of men received them or not. Their reception or nonreception of them *would not affect* ***in the least*** their Divine Authenticity. But it would be for the people to accept them after God had revealed them. In this way they have been submitted to the church, to see whether the members would accept them as binding upon them or not. Joseph himself had too high a sense of his prophetic office and the authority he had received from the Lord to ever submit the revelations which he received to any individual or to any body, however numerous, to have them pronounce upon their validity. (*Juvenile Instructor* Vol 26: <1 January 1891> 13–14)

A Personal Responsibility

As we have seen, the Prophets have ever expressed a desire for the Saints to obtain a personal knowledge of the Truth directly from the Lord, that they might know for themselves *the truth in their own right.* The Scriptures prophecy that the day will come when no man need say 'Know yea the Lord; for all shall know him who remain' (Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:10–11).

Joseph admonished the Saints:

> Search the scriptures — search the revelations which we publish, and *ask your Heavenly Father,* in the name of His son Jesus Christ, **to Manifest the Truth unto you,** and if you do it with an eye single to His glory *nothing doubting,* He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God; nor will there be any room for speculation . . . . . fellow sojourners upon earth, it is your privilege to purify yourselves and come up to the same glory, *and see for yourselves,* and know for yourselves. Ask, and it shall be given you; *seek and ye shall find;* Knock, **and It Shall Be Opened Unto You**. (*TPJS* 11, 13; *HC* 1: <Aug 1832> 282, 284)

Years later the Prophet stated:

> The best way to obtain Truth and Wisdom is not to ask it from books, but to **Go to God in Prayer**, and Obtain Divine Teaching. (*TPJS* 191; *HC* 4: <2 Oct 1841> 425)

Here Joseph affirms that God is the best source from which to obtain knowledge, saying in essence that it is better to trust in God rather than the works of man. He does not however undertake to explain the manner and method which we must follow in order to approach God. Nor does he explain the personal task which we as individuals must first undertake in order to be worthy of Divine Communion.

In the early history of the Church, Oliver Cowdery sought revelation without qualifying himself, and thus failed in obtaining it. The following is the response which the Lord gave to Oliver:

> Do not murmur, my son, for it is wisdom in me that I have dealt with you after this manner. Behold, *you have not understood;* you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought *save it was to ask me.* But, behold, I say unto you, that You Must Study It Out In Your Mind; *then you must ask me* if it be right. (D&C 9: <April 1829> 6–8)

Here the Lord states that in order for a man to obtain divine teaching he must first study his questions out in his mind. From these words it is evident that a personal knowledge of the things of God requires *a diligent effort* from the individual. He must have a burning desire in his own heart to learn the things of God and demonstrate it by "pondering upon the things of God continually" (2 Nephi 4:16). An inquiring mind is the most basic factor in

obtaining revelation. As the Prophet expressed it, "Seek and ye shall find" — "Knock and it shall be opened unto you". This same doctrine is affirmed in the Book of Mormon:

For he that ***Diligently Seeketh*** *shall find;* and the Mysteries of God *shall be unfolded unto them,* by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round. (1 Nephi 10:19)

On yet another occasion the Prophet expressed the same feeling to the Saints:

the things of God are of deep import; and *time*, and ***experience***, and Careful and Ponderous and Solemn thoughts *can only find them out*. Thy mind, O man if thou wilt lead a soul unto salvation, must stretch *as high* as the Utmost Heavens, and search into and contemplate the darkest abyss, and the broad expanse of eternity — Thou Must Commune With God. (*TPJS* 137; *HC* 3: <25 March 1839> 295)

President Young's method of learning is explained in his own words:

I used to Think *and* Pray, *to* Read *and* Think, until I knew and fully understood it for myself, *by the Visions of the Holy Spirit*. (*JD* 6: <29 Aug 1852> 281)

These statements all focus on the need for *sincere desire* and an *inquiring mind* in order to obtain Revelation. If the Saints will keep their minds open to God and His Spirit with a heart full of desire and an enquiring mind, it will prepare the way for the Spirit of God to do its Work. The Spirit will set their minds to ponder upon a subject, and after a sufficient length of time, the individual will be prepared to receive revelation, and a Knowledge of the Truth. The Prophet described the fulfillment of the *revelatory process* as follows:

The Spirit of Revelation is in connection with these blessings. A person may profit by noticing *the first intimation of the spirit of revelation;* for instance, When You Feel Pure Intelligence *flowing into you,* it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus. (*TPJS* 151; *HC* 3: <27 June 1839> 381)

The Book of Mormon adds another dimension in the struggle for knowledge, saying that we must "repent", and "exercise faith" and "bring forth good works":

Yea, he that repenteth and exerciseth faith, and bringeth forth good works, and prayeth continually without ceasing — *unto such it is given to know* the Mysteries of God*;* yea, unto such it shall be given to reveal things which never have been revealed; yea, and it shall be given unto such to bring thousands of souls to repentance (Alma 26:22)

In keeping with this, one of the Prophet's revelations states that it was necessary to keep the commandments of God in order to obtain a fulness of Knowledge and Truth:

And no man receiveth a fulness *unless he keepeth his commandments.* He that keepeth his commandments receiveth Truth and Light, Until he is Glorified in Truth and Knoweth *all things*. (D&C 93: <6 May 1833> 27–28)

Again, on another occasion the Prophet stated:

we cannot keep all the commandments without first knowing them, and we cannot expect to know all, or more than we now know unless we comply with or keep those we have already received. (*TPJS* 256; HC 5: <27 Aug 1842> 135)

— We must Live the Gospel —

If a man is to obtain a Fulness of Exaltation he must make the effort to learn the Truth, and then live his life in accordance therewith. Where much is given much is expected. When a man is given a knowledge of the Gospel, he is then under obligation before the Lord to live it or be damned. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches:

prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you, for *all those who have this law revealed unto them* Must Obey The Same. . . . or he shall be damned saith the Lord God. For *all those who will have a Blessing at my hands* Shall Abide The Law Which Was Appointed For That Blessing, and *the Conditions thereof,* as were instituted from before the foundation of the world. (D & C 132: <12 July 1843> 3, 6, 5)

The Prophet iterated this same Doctrine on the evening of the 2nd of April 1843:

There is a Law, *irrevocably decreed* in heaven before the foundations of the world, Upon Which All Blessings Are Predicated; and when we obtain *any blessing from God*, it is by Obedience To That Law *upon which it is* Predicated. (D & C 130: <2 April 1843> 20–21)

The Prophet added further to the dimensions of this doctrine when he stated:

All men who become **Heirs of God** and **Joint Heirs** *with Jesus Christ* will have to receive the Fulness of the Ordinances [and enter into all the laws and Covenants] of his kingdom; and those who will not receive all the ordinances [and live the laws and Covenants thereof] **Will Come Short** of the Fullness of that Glory, *if they do not lose the whole.* (*TPJS* 309; *HC* 5: <11 June 1843> 424)

Apostle Joseph F. Smith made another similar statement:

While sitting listening to the singing, it occurred to me that, in making a few remarks on this occasion, I would read part of a revelation given to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the 27th of December, 1832 . . . .

He then read section 88 [of the] Doctrine and Covenants . . . from the 3rd to the 32nd verses inclusive.

[". . . . . the spirit and the body are the soul of man. And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul. And the redemption of the soul is through him that quickeneth all things, in whose bosom it is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it.

Therefore, [the earth]must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory; For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father; That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent was it made and created, and for this intent are they sanctified.

And *they who are not sanctified through the law which I have given* unto you, **even the Law Of Christ**, must inherit another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom. For **he who is not able** *to abide the law of a celestial kingdom* Cannot Abide a Celestial Glory. *And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom* **cannot abide a terrestrial glory**. *And he who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom* **cannot abide a telestial glory**; therefore he is not meet for a kingdom of glory. Therefore he must abide a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory.

And again, verily I say unto you, *the earth abideth the law of a celestial kingdom,* for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law — Wherefore, it shall be sanctified; yea, notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and the Righteous Shall Inherit It. *For notwithstanding they die,* they also shall rise again, a spiritual body. *They who are of a celestial spirit* **shall receive the same body** which was a natural body; even ye shall receive your bodies, and your glory shall be that glory *by which your bodies are quickened*. . . . .

And again, verily I say unto you, *that which is governed by law* **is also preserved by law** and Perfected and Sanctified by the same. That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still.

All Kingdoms Have a Law Given; And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom. And *unto every kingdom* **is given a law***;* and Unto Every Law *there are certain bounds* also and conditions. All beings *who abide not in those conditions* **are not justified**. (D&C 88: <27 Dec 1832> 14–39)]

These are the words of God unto us, words that were not spoken in some remote period of the world, and handed down to us by the traditions of our fathers, but they are the words of the Almighty spoken directly to our brethren chosen by God to be his mouthpiece and revelators to the people of this time. They are, therefore, **Words of Truth**, and of Eternal Life, words upon which we may rely with the utmost confi-

dence, without doubt or misgiving, or fear of yielding to the caprice of vain philosophy, for they are not the words of man, but of God. . . . . It is necessary for us to understand these things and bear them in mind, *in order to abide* **the Law Which Has Been Given Unto Us**, a portion of which I have read to you; and which is necessary for us to obey, in order to be found keeping the Celestial Law, and in order to be quickened by that glory, that our souls, which are our bodies and spirits, may be redeemed and restored to life and immortality, to possess *crowns of glory and exaltation,* which are to be had **Only In The Celestial Kingdom**; in other words, that we may be quickened by the *celestial glory* and receive a *fullness thereof*, according to this revelation.

God has given laws to govern all his works, *and especially has he given laws* **to Govern His People**, who are His Sons and Daughters. . . . The object of our earthly existence *is that we may have a fullness of joy,* and that we may become the sons and daughters of God, **in the Fullest Sense Of The Word**, being Heirs of God and Joint Heirs with Jesus Christ, to be **Kings** *and* **Priests** (Rev. 1:6; D&C 76:54–58) unto God, to inherit glory, dominion, exaltation, thrones, and every power and attribute developed and possessed by our heavenly Father (Matt 5:48; Psa 82:1, 6; Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2, 18; 20:7, 26; 21:8; John 13:34; 15:12, 17; 1 John 3:23; 4:7–21). This is the object of our being on this earth. In order to attain unto this exalted position, it is necessary that we go through this mortal experience, or probation, by which we may prove ourselves worthy, through the aid of our elder brother, Jesus. . . . We are foreordained to become conformed to the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29); and in order that we may become like unto him, we must follow in his footsteps, even until we sanctify ourselves by **the Law of Truth** and **Righteousness**. This is the Law of the **Celestial Kingdom**; and when we die, its power will bring us forth in the morning of the *first resurrection*, clothed with glory, immortality, and eternal lives. Unless We Do Keep the Law That God Has Given Unto Us **In The Flesh**, which we have the privilege of receiving and understanding, *we cannot be quickened by its glory,* **neither can we Receive the Fullness thereof** and The Exaltation of the Celestial Kingdom.

"There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of the world, upon which all blessings are predicated; and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."

We Must, Therefore, Learn the Laws of Heaven, **which are the Laws of the Gospel**, *live and obey them with all our hearts,* **and in Faith Abide in Them**, Perfecting Ourselves thereby (Matt 5:48), in order to receive the Fulness of the Glory *of that kingdom.* (*JD* 19: <11 April 1878> 258–260)

If We are to Become — Heirs of God & Joint Heirs with Christ — We Must Sacrifice All Things

If we are to obtain Exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom, we must be willing to sacrifice all that we have in **Obedience** and **Devotion** to God, and this

too, not only in *life*, but also in *death*. Certainly this is the doctrine which has been given to the Latter-day Saints: that "we must forsake all Evil and Cleave unto all Good" and in following through with this edict, we are commanded to "live by *every word* which proceedeth forth from out of the mouth of God". All this we must do regardless of *consequences* — and if in so doing, the price should be the cost of our lives, then we are commanded to pay the Price and *thereby* prove ourselves worthy of Gods Blessing.

This is what the Lord commanded the Saints on the 6th of August 1833, only 17 days after the Saints had been attacked by a Mob in Jackson County Missouri. The Mob had drawn up a document wherein they insisted that the Saints leave the county, *peaceably* if they would, **By Force** if they wouldn't and it had been signed by most of the prominent State Officials in the County. On the other hand, Divine Revelation had commanded the Saints that they must gather in Jackson County and build up Zion. Consider the unequivocal directive that the Lord gave to His people at this crucial time:

> And I give unto you a Commandment, *that ye shall forsake all evil* **and cleave unto All Good**, that ye shall live By Every Word **Which Proceedeth Forth** Out Of The Mouth Of God. For he will give unto the faithful *line upon line, precept upon precept;* and I Will Try You **and Prove You** herewith. And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, Even Life Eternal. Therefore, *be not afraid of your enemies,* for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, **that I will Prove You In All Things**, *whether you will abide in my covenant,* **Even Unto Death**, that you may be found worthy. For *if ye will not abide in my covenant* **Ye Are Not Worthy Of Me**. (D&C 98: <6 Aug 1833> 11–15)

This Revelation declares in certain terms that we must reverence and obey God in all things — and should circumstances require it, we must be willing to Sacrifice our lives for Him and His **Great Cause**. But as is clearly stated above, this is not all that God requires of us. Indeed not only must we be willing to *Die* for Him, but we must also be willing to **Live** for Him and to devote our lives to Him, which is by far the greater task. To be sure, this is the substance of the life and living of a True Saint — that we "forsake all evil and cleave unto all good" and that we "live by every word of God" — all this we must do regardless of the consequences which may follow from the Evil world from without. This is the doctrine which was set forth in the Restoration and not only so, but it is also the doctrine which was established by Christ. And hence, as he predicted, many early Christians were persecuted and fed to lions, for as he explained himself, "the servant is not above his master":

> And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake . . . . The disciple is not above [his] master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? (Matthew 10:22–25)

This Doctrine of Complete Devotion and Total Commitment is found **Everywhere** in the scriptures, especially in the New Testament. Therein it is found on the lips of Jesus in many different passages, including his parables. Consider for example, the Parable of the "Hidden Treasure" and that of the "Pearl of Great Price":

> Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto **Treasure** hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth *and selleth* All That He Hath, **and Buyeth That Field**.
>
> Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly **Pearls**: Who, when he had found one **Pearl of Great Price**, *went and sold* All That He Had, **And Bought It**. (Matt 13:44–46)

The first point to be taken from the parable of the Hidden Treasure, and that of the Merchant Man seeking for Pearls, is that the Kingdom of Heaven is *"hidden"* and finding it will require a diligent search, for it's presence is not necessarily obvious. According to the scriptures, this search will involve both an *internal* and *external* process that will require complete devotion. Secondly as the Savior stated, in order to lay legitimate claim to Heirship in the Kingdom of Heaven, not only must we search for the Kingdom, but once we have found it, we must also give ourselves completely in Sacrifice in order to obtain it. In other words, it is not enough to just simply know *where* the Kingdom of God is — before we can possess it for ourselves personally, **We Must First** Pay The Price Of It, and according to Jesus, the price of the Kingdom is *"all that we have",* including the **Consecration** of our own Lives. This is precisely what is stated in the Parable of the Treasure which was "hid" in a field — once the **Treasure** was located, the man went and sold *"all that he had"* in order to obtain the necessary means to buy the field and then in following through, he went and bought it. It was this last act that gave him *legitimate* Title to the Treasure. Again in the case of the Pearl of Great Price, once the merchant man found it, he went and sold *"all that he had"* in order to obtain the means to purchase the Pearl and then, as in the case of the former, the merchant man followed through and Paid the Price of it. In other words he *sacrificed* all that he had in order to *Obtain the Kingdom of Heaven*. All this most positively demonstrates what Jesus said on another occasion, namely: "where your Treasure is, there will your heart be also":

> Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matthew 6:19–21)

The Lectures on Faith teach this same Principle. These Lectures were originally delivered at Kirtland in "The School of the Prophets", commencing

in late November and ending in December 1834. Later they were canonized by the Prophet and published in the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. They remained as an integral part of the Standard Works until the administration of President Heber J. Grant, who took it upon himself to remove them from the Cannon. With respect to the Principle of Sacrifice, the Sixth lecture teaches the following:

> Let us here observe, that *a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things,* **Never Has Power Sufficient To Produce The Faith** [which is] Necessary Unto Life and Salvation; for from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of Life and Salvation never could be obtained *without the sacrifice* **of All Earthly Things**: it was through this sacrifice, And This Only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy **Eternal Life** . . . . **It Is In Vain** *for persons to fancy to themselves* that they are heirs with those, **Or Can Be** *heirs with them*, Who Have Offered Their All **in Sacrifice**, and by this means obtained faith in God and favor with Him so as to obtain Eternal Life, *unless they in like manner* **Offer Unto Him the Same Sacrifice,** and through that offering obtain the Knowledge that they are **Accepted of Him**. (*Unpublished Revelations* Vol. 1:6: <Nov—Dec 1834> 7–8)

As the above statement so forcefully expresses it, we need not expect to inherit the blessings of Eternal Life in company with the Faithful, unless we first pay the same price that the Faithful have paid. Years later, during the Nauvoo period, the Prophet reaffirmed his belief in this same teaching, however at this time he went even further by connecting it to the doctrine of Godhood and Heirship with Christ in the great Kingdom of the Father. Essentially what the Prophet taught was that the trial that God put upon Abraham in the Sacrificial Offering of his son Isaac, proves beyond doubt that those who would inherit the blessings of Eternal Family and Exaltation must sacrifice *all things* and that as with Abraham, this sacrifice might include that of either wives or children. In actual fact, during the Nauvoo Period the Prophet established this doctrine of *Personal Sacrifice* and **Total Commitment** as **Mandatory** for the Highest Temple Blessings and an *essential* Doctrine of the Priesthood (*Doctrine of the Priesthood* Vol 8:4 <April 1991> 2–9, 59–72). As he then expressed himself:

> The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that *if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life;* **He Must Sacrifice All Things**. (*TPJS* 322; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1843> 555)

Stated in other words, before a man can obtain the Keys of the Familial Priesthood or those Sealing Powers that bestow the blessing of Eternal Family and Everlasting Life with God — before a man can attain to these Keys and Blessings in company with Abraham, first "he must sacrifice all things." No doubt the above statement is connected to certain cryptic passages which are to be found in a Revelation that the Prophet received only one month before — namely the Prophet's 12 July 1843 Revelation on Celestial Marriage:

Abraham received promises Concerning His Seed, and of *the fruit of his loins* — from whose loins ye are, namely, my servant Joseph — which were to continue, so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham **and His Seed**, out of the world they should continue; *both in the world* and **Out Of The World** should they continue As Innumerable As The Stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore, ye could not number them. This Promise Is Yours Also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law is the continuation of ***the works of my Father,*** wherein he glorifieth himself. Go ye, therefore, and Do the Works of Abraham; *enter ye into my law* [i.e. the Principle] and ye shall be saved. But if ye Enter Not Into My Law, [i.e. the Principle] **Ye Cannot Receive The Promises** of my Father, *which he made unto Abraham*.

* * * * * *

I am the Lord thy God, and will be with thee [i.e. the Prophet Joseph Smith] even unto the end of the world, and through all eternity; for verily I seal upon you your Exaltation, and prepare a throne for you In The Kingdom Of My Father, *with Abraham your father*. Behold, I have seen **Your Sacrifices**, and will forgive all your sins; I have seen Your Sacrifices, in obedience to that which I have told you — go, therefore, and I make a way for your escape, *as I accepted the offering* **of Abraham of His Son Isaac**. (D&C 132:30–33, 49–50; *The Seer* Vol 1<January 1853> 9, 10)

You will notice the continued references to Abraham in the above Revelation — and not to Abraham only, but it also speaks of the Promises which God made to him. This revelation speaks of the "Blessings of Abraham" and the "Works of Abraham" — and in keeping with this, it also speaks directly to the point of "the Sacrifice of Abraham", as in the case of the "Offering of his son Isaac". In continuing it goes on to state that the Prophet Joseph Smith was a descendant of Abraham and that in keeping with the "Everlasting Covenant" which God made with Abraham, he was therefore entitled to the same **Promises** and **Blessings** as **Abraham**. However, as the revelation states in unequivocal terms, before the Prophet could obtain the Promises and Blessings of Abraham, **First** he must do the *"Works of Abraham"*.

It is evident from the context of the whole Revelation, that the *concept* of "the Works of Abraham" which the Prophet was working on, included **More** *than just one particular aspect* of Abraham's life. Indeed, as it has already been pointed out, in the end of the Revelation it speaks of the "Sacrifices" which had been made by the Prophet *"in obedience to what the Lord had* Commanded *him"* and it states that the Lord accepted his "sacrifices" even as He had accepted "the offering of Abraham in the case of his son Isaac".

We can gather from this that whatever it was the Lord "told" him, it was still on the Prophet's mind a month later when he spoke to the Saints regarding the Laws of God and the Fulness of the Priesthood. On the occasion of this speech, he spoke openly and frankly to the point stated above. He told the Saints that: *"in order to become* a Joint Heir in the Heirship of the Son, we

must put away *all our traditions* and Live **By Every Word** which proceedeth forth *from out of the mouth of God."* In building on this same theme, he further explained that in the case of those "angels" who received not exaltation, that the cause of their great failure was centered in the fact that they could not free their minds from the influence of the "traditions of their fathers" while in their mortal probation and in consequence of this they rejected the Revelations of God. Finally, in continuing on with his speech, the Prophet stated that: "The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that *if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life;* **He Must Sacrifice All Things***"* (*TPJS* 322; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1843> 555). At this point it should come as no surprise to learn that "The Keys of the Kingdom of an Endless Life" constituted the major theme of the Prophet's discourse, and this discourse required no less than 3 hours and 15 minutes to deliver.

The "Blessings" and "Works of Abraham" constitute the central theme, not only in the Prophet's Revelation on Celestial Marriage, but also in this speech that he delivered the following month. In both cases a whole package of doctrine is succinctly tied together, and in both cases, the central theme focuses on the Life and Works of Abraham. The idea is continually presented, that if we want the Highest Blessings we must *live* the Highest Laws and keep all of God's *Celestial Commandments*. In no place do the Scriptures say that God only requires us to keep some of His Commandments. On the contrary, we are *commanded* to keep all of them! We are not told that it is only necessary for us to become a little like God, but rather, as the Savior has told us, we must become '**Perfect even as God our Father is Perfect**'. Over and over again, the Savior has instructed us, that both in heart and mind, we must become all that is of God and Godliness! Certainly the ultimate accomplishment of this great polishing work of personal perfection will require that we keep all of God's Celestial Laws (D&C 88: <27 Dec 1832> 21–24). It is just as the Prophet has taught us:

> Here, then, we have this part of our subject immediately before us for consideration; God has in reserve a time, or period appointed in His own bosom, when He will bring all His subjects, *who have obeyed His voice* and **Kept His Commandments**, into His celestial rest. This rest is of such perfection and glory, that man has need of a Preparation before he can, according to the laws of that kingdom[,] enter it and enjoy its blessings. — This being the fact, God has given *certain laws* to the human family, which, If Observed, are sufficient *to prepare them* **To Inherit This Rest**. This, then, we conclude, was the purpose of God in giving His laws to us: *If not,* Why, or For What Were They Given? If the whole family of man were as well off without them as they might be with them, for what purpose or intent were they ever given? Was it that God wanted to merely show that He could talk? This would be nonsense, to suppose that He would condescend to talk in vain; for it would be in vain, and to no purpose whatever: because, *all the commandments* contained in the law of the Lord, *have the sure promise* annexed of a Reward To All Who Obey — predicated upon the fact that

they are really the promises of a Being who cannot lie, and who is abundantly able to fulfill every tittle of His word: and if man were as well prepared, or could be as well prepared, to meet God without their ever having been given in the first instance, why were they [i.e. the Laws of God] ever given? for certainly, in that case they can now do him no good. (*The Evening and Morning Star* Vol 2: <Kirtland, Ohio Feb 1834> 126; *TPJS* 54; *HC* 2: <22 Jan 1834> 11–12)

The Divine mandate, that we must become "Perfect, even as our Father which is in Heaven is Perfect" and this too by faithfully observing *all of God's Celestial Laws* — this Divine fiat may intimidate us and lead us to feel discouraged, so that as with Jesus' disciples in ancient days, we are led to exclaim, "who then can be saved?" But while maintaining in our heart a Faith In God, together with a righteous *Hope of Salvation,* we must ever remember the response which the Lord gave to this question: "With men this is impossible; but with God All Things Are Possible" (Matt 19:26). As Jesus expressed it on another occasion, God has sufficient power that of these stones He is able to raise up Seed unto Abraham (Matt 3:9; Luke 3:9; Gen 2:7; *TPJS* 319), and just as God has the power to raise up children unto Abraham from stones, just so, God has Almighty Power to Exalt those children, if only they will Obey His Laws and keep His Commandments! This is the substance of what is taught in the Book of Mormon. As the doctrine is set forth by Nephi:

I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which He commanded them. (1 Nephi 3:7)

Our Lord and Savior has commanded us that we should be "Perfect, even as God our Father is Perfect", and just so if we will abide in the Celestial Law and diligently strive to keep His commandments, surely Our Divine Father will prepare the way for us, that we may accomplish that which He has commanded — that ultimately *we might become* Perfect even as Our Divine Father is Perfect. In Truth, God is our Great Heavenly Parent, and as with all worthy Parents, He expects that ultimately His Children will grow up to become All That He Is, but first we must learn to keep His Commandments! This is the Divine Promise to the Children of the Obedient. If we want to be blessed of God, we must live for the Blessing. In keeping with this, if we want the "Blessings of Abraham", we must abide by the Law upon which the blessings of Abraham are "Predicated" (D&C 132: <12 July 1843> 5, 24, 32–33). Again the Scriptures teach that, 'Now, *in this life*, is the Time to Prepare to Meet God!' (Alma 34:31–35; 12:24; Rom 13:11; 2 Cor 6:2; Alma 13:21; 34:31) In other words, if we want to receive the **Highest Blessings**, we must **Live** and **Abide** by the "**Highest Law**" and we must do it in this life (D&C 132: <12

July 1843> 22). It is just as the Savior has taught us, if we are the disciples of Christ, we must do the works of Christ, for by our works shall we be known (Matt 7:16, 20), and in the end when the dead are raised up to stand before God, by their works shall they be judged (Rev 20:12).

It is the calling of our Divine Father to see to it, that His Children have the necessary opportunity for growth and development, that ultimately, they might become like Him, and this too, even to that extent that they become "Perfect as He is Perfect". As Christ has said, with men this is not possible, but with God, **All Things Are Possible!** (Matt 19:26) But before we can achieve this, first we must make the wholehearted effort. Indeed, before the Divine Plan can be accomplished, we must learn to abide with God and Live in His Law. God will give us the time and the experience that we need for our growth and development, but this does not prove that we need not prove ourselves worthy of that time and experience which He gives us.

In keeping with this, the Scriptures have set Abraham before us as a great example of Piety and Perfection. These Scriptures do not say that it is only necessary for us to do some of Abraham's works but not all! They do not say that it is important for us to live Plural Marriage, but that we need not concern ourselves with the other High Laws that God required of him. On the contrary, they tell us that if we are to inherit the blessings of Abraham, we must "do the works of Abraham" and Surely there was more to the life of the Godly man Abraham than the simple fact that he had more than one wife! And this being the case, if we are to *Inherit the Blessings of Abraham*, then we must live all the High Laws of God, just as did Abraham! It is precisely as it is stated in prophesy by Isaiah:

> Hearken to me, Ye That Follow After Righteousness, *ye that seek the Lord*: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look Unto Abraham Your Father, *and* **Unto Sarah that Bare You** (Isaiah 51:1–2)

This Prophetic passage of scripture speaks of our day and time and specifically alludes to those in our day and time who "Follow After Righteousness" and those that "Seek The Lord". Following this it admonishes them that they should 'look unto Abraham their Father and unto Sarah their Mother.' Again as it is stated in the New Testament:

> They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's Children, ye would do the Works of Abraham. (John 8:39)

A reading of John Chapter 8 will reveal that Jesus does not really deny that those with whom he spoke were the descendants of Abraham. What he said is that if you do not live and abide by the same High Law that

Abraham did and thereby do *"the Works of Abraham"*, that ultimately you will be disinherited — you relegate yourself to the status of a bastard and you become numbered with the children of the disobedient. Essentially the problem for the Jews in the day of Jesus was one of misunderstanding. As the Jews well knew, Abraham received certain promises and blessings from God the Father, and in accordance with the Everlasting Covenant which God then made with Abraham, these same promises and blessings were to be passed down and bestowed upon Abraham's posterity after him. Because of this, many Jews presumed that simply being one of Abraham's descendants and being of the circumcised entitled them to all the blessings of Abraham (Luke 3:9; Matt 3:9). But Jesus corrects this misunderstanding and explains that even though they may be descendants of Abraham, still before they could inherit the blessings of Abraham, they must first prove themselves worthy by "Doing the Works of Abraham".

It is evident that the Jews in the days of Jesus had the same problem that the "Born Again Christians" and "Latter-day Saints" do in our day. This is particularly true where it concerns being "Born Again" or "Born under the Covenant of Temple Marriage" or being "Baptized". As with these, the Jews supposed that inasmuch as they were born under the Abrahamic Covenant, that they had it made in the shade. But actually being circumcised is an outward ordinance, just as is baptism, and simply being circumcised in the flesh does not prove that you are circumcised in heart, any more than being baptized proves that you have repented of your sins. And as for those who are "Born Again", it is necessary that "Good Works" continue to follow after them, for we are what we think and do. As Solomon expressed it, "as [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

All this brings us back to where we started. As the Prophet stated it: "The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that *if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life;* **He Must Sacrifice All Things**" *and this too, in complete obedience and devotion to God — it is this whole package that constitutes "the works of Abraham"* and not just one aspect thereof. According to this then, among other good works, "the Sacrifice of all things", constitutes "The Works of Abraham". Not only so, but this is a doctrine of which the Savior spoke and spoke often. Indeed, the words of the Savior as recorded in the New Testament, repeatedly vouch for the necessity of the doctrine of the Personal Sacrifice of all things. Consider the following demands that he put upon his disciples who would follow after him:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to *set a man at variance* **Against His Father**, and *the daughter* **Against Her Mother**, and *the daughter in law* **Against Her Mother In Law**. And *a man's foes* **Shall Be They of His Own Household**. He That Loveth Father or

Mother **More Than Me** Is Not Worthy Of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. *He that findeth his life shall lose it:* and *he that loseth his life* **For My Sake** *shall find it*. (Matthew 10:34–39)

Jesus is the "perfect" person to make such demands upon his disciples, for he is our Savior and in this capacity he paid the ultimate price for us. On top of this, he is our great example of *perfection* and *piety* and we ought therefore to emulate him in our own personal lives. In the capacity of his calling as the Savior of the World he was indeed commanded of his Father to sacrifice all things and in this sacrifice it was required of him that he offer up his own life. This we all acknowledge, but what is often forgotten by his disciples is that he also taught that "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." (Matthew 10:22–25). As disciples of Christ we often hear that we should "pick up our cross and follow after him", but do we really comprehend what this means? As it is expressed in Romans:

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ; if so be **That We Suffer With Him**, *that we may be also glorified together".* (Romans 8:16–18)

As the above passage expresses it, we are to become "Joint-Heirs with Christ; but in order to do so we must first **Suffer With Him**, and if we do this then it is possible for us that *"we may be also glorified together".* This statement has much in common with the Prophet's statement wherein he said that "the sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering of Isaac shows that if a man would attain to the Keys of the Kingdom of an Endless Life *he must sacrifice all things*. Both the passage in Romans and the Prophet's statement state that the sacrifice of all things is essential in order to obtain Exaltation or Godhood. As the Prophet stated it, if he were to teach the same doctrine that Jesus taught, they would cry treason and put him to death. In keeping with this, the Prophet was commanded to teach what Jesus taught, and they did cry treason and he was put to death.

The statement in Romans, together with many other passages that are to be found throughout the New Testament make it clear that the Prophet Joseph Smith was not alone in teaching the necessity of "the sacrifice of all things". Not only so but the above passage from Matthew demonstrates that the Prophet Joseph Smith was in good company when he taught that it might be necessary to sacrifice wives or children in order to inherit Eternal Life. Indeed the Lord Jesus makes the same doctrine very clear in the above statement. The Lord clearly states that the Gospel would not bring peace but a sword — that the daughter would be turned against her mother, and the son against his father, and that a man's enemies would be those of his own household. On yet another occasion he said that a "Prophet of God is not without honor save in his own home." (Matt 13:37; Mark 6:4; John 4:44)

But why is it that the Gospel of Peace would bring a sword — why would it cause division and contention in a home? t is because of the great Sacrifice and Commitment, and the High Law of **Love** and **Union** that is required by God between members of a Celestial Family — because of this, many will rebel.

On top of this, not all of a family will repent and be converted, and of those who do, not all will remain steadfast. There will be sons and daughters and fathers and mothers who will not abide in the High Law of God's Kingdom — a "**Perfect Law of Celestial Theocracy**"! Wherever the Gospel goes, the legions of the Devil are sure to follow. Those who do not receive a Testimony and the Love of the Truth (2 Thes 2:10–11) shall be within the Power of Satan and he shall *"rage in the hearts of the children of men,* and Stir Them Up To Anger Against That Which Is Good . . . . And thus the devil Cheateth Their Souls, and leadeth them away, carefully . . . down to hell." (2 Nephi 28:20–21)

As the Scriptures explain, *those who are not converted*, together with Those who Loose their Faith, will **Hate** the Truth, causing daughter to be turned against mother and son against father. At times those who accept the Gospel are placed in a position where they must make a choice, between the Gospel and their family. The Lord has said "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." But consider what the Lord has promised to those who place all on the altar for the Gospels sake, and who go forward in righteousness and abide in God's law:

> And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and [many that are] last shall be first. (Matt 19:29–30)

The Prophet's Revelation on Celestial Marriage enlarges on this same point:

> I will bless him and multiply him and give unto him an hundredfold in this world, of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, houses and lands, wives and children, and crowns of eternal lives in the eternal worlds . . . *for I will magnify my name* **Upon All Those** Who Receive and Abide In My Law. (D & C 132: <12 July 1843> 55)

Again another passage in the same Revelation states:

> Ye shall come forth in the First Resurrection; and *if it be after* the First Resurrection, in the next resurrection; *and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions,* all heights and depths . . . and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, *to their* **Exaltation** *and* **Glory** *in all things* . . . which glory shall be a **Fulness and Continuation of the Seeds** *forever and ever*. Then Shall They Be Gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be *from everlasting to everlasting,* because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because *they have all power,* and the angels are subject unto them. Verily, verily, I say unto you, *except ye abide my law* ye Cannot Attain To

This Glory. For *straight is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto* the Exaltation and Continuation *of the lives,* and **Few There Be That Find It**, because *ye receive me not in the world* Neither Do Ye Know Me. But *if ye receive me in the world*, then **Shall Ye Know Me**, and shall receive your *exaltation*; that where I am ye shall be also. This is Eternal Lives — to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive Ye, Therefore, My Law. Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, because they receive me not, **Neither Do They Abide In My Law**. (D&C 132 <12 July 1843> :19–25; see also verses 55, 64; *see also* Matt. 19:29; Mark 10:29–30; Luke 18:29–30)

The Scriptures have clearly testified of our day. A day in which a man can not stand on borrowed light — a day in which a man would have to stand by virtue of the oil within his own lamp (D&C 45: <7 March 1831> 56–57). This is the day for which "our forefathers have waited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times . . . . a time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld . . . all . . . shall be revealed, in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times". (*TPJS* 138; *HC* 3: <20–25 March 1839> 296; D&C 121: <20 March 1839> 27–31) "The *mysteries* of those things that have been kept hid from the foundation of the world until now . . . . are to be poured down from heaven upon the heads of babes, Yea upon the weak, obscure and despised ones of the Earth." (*TPJS* 137) But what are the responsibilities of those to whom the Lord should give this knowledge. In answer to this the Scriptures teach:

> And now, how much more cursed is he that knoweth the will of God and doeth it not, than he that only believeth, or only hath cause to believe and falleth into transgression? (Alma 32:1)

As the old adage says, "Where much is given much is expected" (Luke 12:47–48). When a man is given the knowledge of God and the Gospel, he is then placed under obligation to embrace it. The Doctrine and Covenants makes the following statement:

> For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation. (D&C 82: <26 April 1832> 3)

As the Prophet Joseph Smith expressed it, "When God offers a blessing or knowledge to a man, and he refuses to receive it, he will be damned" (*TPJS* 322; *HC* 5: <27 Aug 1843> 555). Once a man has been given the knowledge of the Truth, should he then turn aside, and follow after the Materialistic World and the *Lusts of the Flesh*, he is then placed in that same situation as the *"Wicked and Unprofitable Servant"* to whom the Lord gave "One Talent", and who then buried it in the ground (Matt 25:15; D&C 82:3). As the Lord expressed this concept in the New Testament:

> For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave Five

Talents, to another Two, and to another One; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the Five Talents went and traded with the same, and made them *other five talents*. And likewise he that had received Two, he also gained *other two*. But he that had received One went and digged in the earth, and *hid his lord's money*. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received Five Talents came and brought ***other five talents,*** saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me ***five talents:*** behold, I have gained beside them **Five Talents More**. His lord said unto him, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant:* ***thou hast been faithful over a few things,*** I will make thee Ruler Over Many Things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received Two Talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me Two Talents: behold, I have gained *two other talents* beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; *thou hast been faithful* ***over a few things, I will make thee ruler*** **Over Many Things**: *enter thou into the joy of thy lord.* Then he which had received the **One Talent** came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art *an hard man,* reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and **Hid Thy Talent** *in the earth:* lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, **Thou Wicked and Slothful Servant**, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. *Take therefore the* Talent ***from him***, and ***give it unto him which hath ten talents.*** For **Unto Every One That Hath Shall Be Given**, ***and he shall have abundance:*** but *from him that hath not* Shall Be Taken Away **Even That Which He Hath**. And *cast ye the* **Unprofitable Servant** *into* **Outer Darkness**: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 25:14–30)

God our Father has offered us the greatest of all gifts. He has offered us the gift of Eternal Life. He has made us to be His Sons and His Daughters and has offered us **Joint Heirship** in His Kingdom in company with His Beloved Son Jesus Christ. As it is expressed in the New Testament:

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, **That We are the Children of God**:

And *if children*, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and **Joint-Heirs with Christ**; *if so be that we suffer with him* [i.e. Sacrifice], that we may be also *Glorified Together*. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Rom 8:14–17).

Again as it is stated in John chapter three:

Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we **the Sons of God** [the Father], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He [i.e. the Father] shall appear, we shall

be like him; for we shall see Him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him Purifieth Himself, *even as he is pure*. (1 John 3:1–3)

Again as the Prophet Joseph Smith expressed it: "If you wish to go where God is, you must be like God, or possess the Principles which God possesses" (*TPJS* 216). In other words we must search out our God and the *Mysteries of Godliness* (*TPJS* 364) and learn to become **What God Is** (*TPJS* 346–347). When God the Father appeared to Abraham as is recorded in Genesis chapter 17, His first Com-mandment was for Abraham to walk before God, and "be thou perfect!" (Gen 17:1) Again in the days of Christ, he commanded his disciples to "Be yea therefore Perfect *even as your Father which is in Heaven* is Perfect!" (Matt 5:48) Not only was this *Commandment* given to Abraham and the Disciples of Christ in the New Testament, but it was also given time and time again to the children of Israel at the time of Moses:

For I am Yahweh your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy . . . . For I am Yahweh that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. (Lev 11:44–45)

And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I Yahweh your God am holy. . . . . And ye shall be holy unto me: for I Yahweh am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine. (Lev 19:1–2, 26; see also 20:6–8)

Again in New Testament times, Peter admonished the Saints:

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But *as he which hath called you* is **Holy**, *so be ye* **Holy** in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be Ye Holy; for **I Am Holy**. (1 Peter 1:13–16)

From these passages of Scripture we gather that God the Father is our Great Prototype — just as is His Beloved Son! But as it is stated above, before we can inherit *the most sacred of all blessings*, first we must **Open Our Minds and Hearts** and *reach out to God* and *His Spirit*. We must do this *wholeheartedly* — "with all our heart, might, mind, strength and soul". We must open our minds and reach out to our Divine Father for the Knowledge of God and Godliness, and then we must follow after what He gives us with *single mind-edness* and *full purpose of heart,* and then, according to the promises — happily **We Shall Find Him** (Acts 17:27), for what man if his son doeth ask for bread shall give him a stone. How much more then shall our Father which is Heaven give good gifts unto them that ask Him! (Matt 7:11)